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The Editors
MID-EAST MISSILES, WEAPONS ON TRIAL

ONE DOLLAR

MARCH 27, 1981

Spasm war Thomas Powers **A potential papacy** John Garvey **Making (some) busing work** J.S. Fuerst **Missionaries & folk culture** Jordan Bishop

Also: Books, stage, screen

What should the Democrats do?

JIM CHAPIN

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Correspondence

Faith & their works

Evanston, Ill.

To the Editors: Frank McConnell's review of Waugh's *Letters* and Greene's *Ways of Escape* [Jan. 16] is an engaging one, but I wonder if the correspondence he seems to see between the faith of each man and his works is not mistaken. I think it would be closer to the truth of the matter to say that whatever the religious experience of each man was it had no influence on his work and cannot be found there in any but a superficial way.

The novels of Waugh commonly regarded as satires (*Decline and Fall, Vile Bodies*, etc.) are more celebrations of the society they portray than condemnations of it (what "moral concerns" are embodied in a Captain Grimes or a Basil Seal?). What his works as a whole reveal is not a sustained satiric vision made possible by a "firm faith" but a gradually dying sensibility that finally in his war trilogy leads him to create a protagonist who feels nothing and wishes only to die. As for Greene, his typical hero, whether a Major Scobie or a Maurice Castle, is a man who is betrayed by his pity for his fellow man—an affecting fate but not necessarily a tragic one or one related to an "uncertain faith" or to any faith.

The emotional and imaginative life that sustains the novels of each man is largely untouched, I believe, by religious faith. For Waugh, as well as for Greene, conversion was chiefly a matter of the intellect (Waugh told Father D'Arcy, who received him into the church, that he took the step "on firm intellectual conviction but with little emotion"). If religion was more than intellectual conviction for either man, as Mr. McConnell seems to be saying, there is no evidence for that in their literary work or in as much of their private lives as has been revealed. JOHN McCUDDEN

The author replies:

John McCudden's objections to my review of Waugh and Greene are articulate, intelligent, and expressed with great courtesy and point: obviously the man is not a professional literary critic.

My only response is, I fear, simply to observe that we all are entitled to our opinions with the purchase price of the book. McCudden does raise a very interesting point: that is, the degree to which we can or should invoke what we know of an author's religious beliefs in interpreting his work. I'm afraid I happen to believe that we should invoke them to a much greater degree than McCudden does. Not because I think religious belief is all that special a thing, but precisely because I think it's all that *common* a thing. "Faith," to give it its inflated term, is an itch we all feel, and an itch we all can't quite scratch. With Waugh and Greene, I find their varieties of religious experience present on almost every page of their fiction: and present, furthermore, in the only way a faith can really be present in a novel or in a human life, as something to be held, questioned, doubted, venerated and ridiculed at the same time. Mr. McCudden doesn't, and I am not the man to tell him he should. It's simply a matter of the way you read a book, and any way you read a book and make human sense of it is, as far as I am concerned, a right way.

I would insist, though, that even in their strenuous protestations against their roles as "religious novelists," Waugh and Greene — and, for that matter, Camus, Sartre, and William S. Burroughs — establish for us the degree to which they do fulfill that role. But if I'm hesitant about defending the "religiosity" of Greene's fiction, I'm also wise enough to stop talking at all once I've introduced William Burroughs into the debate. FRANK McCONNELL

Peace & weapons

Hollis, N.Y.

To the Editors: Your editorial, "The Whirlpool of Weapons" [Jan. 30], makes an analogy between the Supreme Court's abortion ruling and Presidential Directive 59 as decisions that stir up militant movements in reaction.

However for a right-to-life movement vis-à-vis preparation for nuclear war to be effective, public opinion would have to be mobilized against raising money for better bombs. That could bring the hawks back to earth and strengthen the position of the lonely witnesses such as the Berrigans. Yet you still visualize the possibility of some "new weapons system" being "required for international stability." Most citizens including me are not equipped to argue the technical merits of such an eventuality but it does not take too much insight to see that new weapons systems are more likely to heighten international tension.

Sooner or later more people in this country will have to realize that the gentle can inherit the earth and will have to make greater efforts towards that end if Christianity and the other institutions which are characteristic of the human race's worthier efforts are to have a fighting chance (if you will pardon the expression) to survive. So far the only new weapons system I have read about is the neutron bomb. ROLAND LAIRD

Scarsdale, N.Y.

To the Editors: I am sorry to see *Commonweal* [Counterforce, Feb. 13] becoming an accomplice in the so-called "counterforce" debate. You would have been among the first, I thought, to recognize this as merely another stage of the continuing discussion in the madhouse of nuclear politics. It all sounds rational if perplexing, important if not quite reassuring, a tantalizing chess-like problem suitable for the consideration of civilized human beings.

(Continued on page 191)

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OIL ON THE FLAMES

NOTHING in the Middle East is simple. The decision of the Reagan administration to sell Saudi Arabia missiles and additional equipment to extend the capabilities of its American-supplied F-15 jets is a good example. The F-15 is regarded as the U.S. Air Force's most advanced fighter—a plane that has also proved to be equally suitable for fighter-bomber and ground attack missions. Included in the new equipment are additional fuel tanks that will extend the F-15 combat range from four hundred and fifty miles to over one thousand. This proposed move is contrary to the pledge made when the F-15's were sold to Saudi Arabia during the Carter administration and makes it possible for the planes to be used against Israel from Saudi territory in any future war. Not unnaturally, Israel is less than thrilled with the prospect. Israeli Ambassador Ephrain Evron immediately notified the State Department of Israeli disappointment and concern over a decision which, he said, "can only exacerbate the arms race in our region and increase the dangers for Israel." Congress could block the sale to Saudi Arabia, and many there are outraged that the 1978 pledge against such a move is being broken. But the Reagan administration says that circumstances have changed so radically as to render that pledge null and void. "The Soviet invasion of Afghanistan, the turmoil of the Iranian revolution, the Iran-Iraq war, and the Soviet presence in South Yemen and Ethiopia underscore the instability in the region and the dangers of Soviet penetration and exploitation," said the State Department.

If the administration continues to sell the Saudi deal on the basis that the Russians are coming, as it probably will, it may be hard for opponents in Congress to defeat the move. Yet worry that the F-15 deal is the first step in an escalating arms race in the Middle East was quickly confirmed by the administration itself. To ease Israeli objections to its Saudi decision, a spokesman for the State Department urged Congress to offer Israel more F-15 jet planes to add to those it already has and provide $600 million in subsidized loans to permit that country to make the purchase. This to a country already going bankrupt under its enormous defense costs and which already suffers as a result an inflation rate of 180 percent. To sweeten the deal still further, Israel would be granted U.S. permission, hitherto denied, to sell its Kfir fighter jets with their American engines to Taiwan, Ecuador, South Africa, and other nations, thus increasing the arms race even more.

Significant as it is, the administration's determination to sell Saudi Arabia additional lethal equipment is only a small part of its plan for an increased program of military assistance to many countries in the Middle East, including the Persian Gulf. Oil-producing states like Saudi Arabia, which can pay cash for military equipment, will be expected to do so. Other and poorer nations, like Israel, Egypt, Turkey, Jordan, and some Persian Gulf countries, will be offered the chance to buy armaments on favorable terms and then receive economic support funds from the

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United States to enable them to carry out these arms deals. Expected cost of the program to the U.S. is expected to be from $6 to $7 billion, and that cost has been exempted from across-the-board Reagan budget cuts, although reductions are scheduled in economic aid programs.

Congress will weigh the Saudi matter first, and the outcome on that is uncertain. Under the law, the projected sale will go through unless majorities in both House and Senate vote against it within thirty days of formal notification. Israeli supporters in Congress and others are opposed, but many are reported to be leery of tackling President Reagan head-on so early in the game; it may turn out that administration reliance on the Soviet threat will be enough to get the Saudi deal through and, indeed, the entire arms package for the Middle East. For our part, however, we have serious qualms about the entire administration approach to this and other foreign policy issues, and we would be glad to see a full debate on the subject in Congress. One has to grant that sufficient arms backed up by national determination can sometimes serve as a check to outside military aggression. Nonetheless, a policy that ignores domestic and regional political and economic considerations and that stresses the purely military approach to such an extent as this is surely lopsided and dangerous. Saudi Arabia is in danger, but how much of that danger is from internal aggression, as evidenced in the Great Mosque revolt in Mecca in 1979? What good will F-15's do in such internal crises, and will not the close identification of the Saudis with the United States after such a deal increase internal Islamic discontent? And will not continued administration ignoring of the Palestinian problem further aggravate already strong anti-U.S. sentiments throughout the entire region?

In Iran the United States made the fatal mistake of imagining that supplying military equipment would magically provide regional security, and as a result we pumped billions of dollars worth of arms to the Shah over a period of many years. If the subsequent debacle there proves anything, it is that it is worse than useless to force such arms and such an alliance on people who prefer to be free to make their own decisions. Unless Congress is able to persuade this administration to abandon its primarily military approach and broaden its policies in the light of pressing political, cultural, and economic considerations, the U.S. is in grave danger of repeating its Iranian mistake, not only in Saudi Arabia but throughout the Middle East.

MORE ON WEAPONRY

A number of good points are made by readers responding to recent *Commonweal* editorials and articles on the dangers of a new strategic arms race ("Correspondence," pp 162, 191). "New weapons systems are *more likely* to heighten international tension" (Roland Laird — our italics) than to support international stability. Debate about nuclear weapons has been turned into "a tantalizing chess-like problem" (W. H. Ferry) that insanely abstracts from both fundamental assumptions and

KEEP IT CLEAN

For those present at the Court of Common Pleas in Norristown, Pennsylvania, for the "Plowshares 8" trial two weeks ago, the argument often seemed to devolve into a lexicographer's dispute — in the primordial tradition of God's summons to name the dumb animals properly. Only in this case it was a question of the proper name to give to the toolmaker's art in Building No. 9 of G.E.'s sprawling King of Prussia facility. It is no doubt too simple — though trials have a way of sharpening issues to such a precise focus — but the question, to those present, often seemed to be whether the technician's bloodless prose or the poet's bloody images shall have mastery over the naming of dumb instruments of destruction.

The two damaged Mark 12A re-entry cones, one of gleaming aluminum, the other encased in dull, hard carbon black — both scrubbed clean of offending blood — stood like two voiceless sentinels before the judge's bench throughout the trial. To the testifying G.E. officials, guards and toolmakers, they were just anonymous "hardware," their use or what they might ultimately carry someone else's business. Aghast at finding seven people hammering his handiwork last September 9, the plant manager said he couldn't *imagine* why anyone would want to do such an awful thing. And every time the defendants imagined out loud to what use the new "winnable-war" nuclear strategists might put such hardware, the prosecutor leapt to his feet to object — and was sustained. It was as if words that bespoke imagining what a "hair trigger" computer error or Presidential Order 59 might mean were offensive to pious ears — as if it were to yell "Fire!" in a crowded room. The point was to keep the jury's imagination straitjacketed and becalmed, and finally Judge Samuel W. Salus 2nd was to rule as irrelevant the admission of any expert testimony, for instance from Dr. Robert J. Lifton, which might have brought the informed voices of Hiroshima victims within earshot. And he instructed the jury to stop their ears to the kind of language the defendants used to name those innocent-looking vessels, those tools they'd ritually recast with their mason's hammers and their own blood. An act of transubstantiation, it was clear, was to be kept out of G.E. assembly lines; it had no place there.

In the end, the jurors found the plowsharing of deadly vessels non-violent, but in convicting the defendants of conspiracy, burglary, and criminal mischief, they obeyed the judge's instruction to wash those dumb instruments clean of blood, victims' blood. The defendants tried, but apparently that blood had no place in court. We hope this is no parable for what's out of order in the current nuclear debate.

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the reality of destruction on a global scale. Citizens should engage in grass-roots political organizing on questions of armaments (Ruth Benn). Language is slippery: calling the arms budget "defense spending" rather than "military spending suggests an *a priori* approval of the uses to which those arms may be put; calling SALT "disarmament" rather than "arms control" is simply wrong and obscures the militaristic purpose to which arms control agreements can be and have been directed (Erwin Knoll).

There is more to these letters than that, however; in several of them one detects a common theme, namely that to concede *anything* in the debate about armaments is to undermine the morally effective and consistent grounds against a new round of war-threatening weapons building. This is true of *any* willingness to consider the stabilizing potential of new weapons systems, any willingness to examine the strategic debate, even with stated reservations, in the terms employed by military analysts, any willingness to support a SALT treaty that limits rather than reverses the growth in armaments. To do these things, they say, is to get caught in the mental machinery of the Pentagon, and to end up an "accomplice" instead of an effective opponent of nuclear immorality.

It is because there is some truth to these objections that *Commonweal* commented critically on the "neutral," consensus-building quality of the Carnegie study on security and arms control; why we objected to its neglect of national values and moral constraints ["The Whirlpool of Weapons," Jan. 30]. Letting other people define the terms of the questions is to let them, already, determine most of the answers.

The problem is that a number of the questions concerning U.S. military strength and military preparedness strike us as perfectly legitimate ones, and these questions, unfortunately, are entangled with those we would not consider legitimate. To refuse the discussion that might sort the ones from the others does not make sense, morally or politically. It is worth remembering that the percentage of Americans who believe that the government is spending too little on arms has shot from twelve percent to sixty percent in seven years! Moscow deserves a lot of credit for this dramatic change, of course; but blowing a lead like that ought to make the peace forces examine their own efforts. At the very least, it seems that Americans have some worries that must be addressed, and not just by changing the subject, even if the new topic is as compelling as nuclear destruction. As a distinguished American historian wrote to us recently, in the wake of the election "liberals must think more clearly about the two most distasteful issues — money and defense."

It is not clear thinking to let the "rational" scenarios of nuclear strategists dominate the debate; but it is also not clear thinking to say, with one of our correspondents, that it is a "mortal error" to admit that "nuclear weapons make some kind of military sense" or to agree with Mr. Haig that "there are some things that are worth fighting for." Nuclear weapons do, alas, make *some kind* of military sense. There are also — sorry, no "alas," here — some things worth fighting for. We do not believe that support for the MX, the B-1, or the neutron bomb flows from our "concessions" on these points; quite the contrary, we believe that those unwilling to grant these points are unlikely, despite their dedication and sacrifices, to swing more than a small number of Americans to their viewpoint.

The struggle for international peace and justice has more than one front. It is necessary to keep the moral sense alive to the desperate situation the world is in. It is necessary to express outrage at what is outrageous — the shift toward first-strike and "limited-nuclear-war" strategies, for instance. But it is also necessary to recognize that justice has sometimes been achieved through force of arms, and peace preserved by the balance of power.

Our admirable colleague at *The Progressive* is baffled by our reference to "non-pacifist morality," which seems to him, we gather, a contradiction in terms. We, in turn, could be baffled at his bafflement, seeing as how many of the world's ethical and religious systems have long articulated forms of "non-pacifist morality." But we recognize and respect the point of view he is representing: that after the first justification of military force, the moral dam is burst; nothing more can be said, no further barriers erected in the name of morality. It happens that we disagree.

Of several minds: *John Garvey*

THE POPE'S TWO VOICES

NOTES ON AN ASIAN JOURNEY

THE RECENT VISIT of Pope John Paul II to Asia was significant in many ways. The style was typical of the post-Vatican II papacy: here the pope was a pastor, not a prisoner of the Vatican. At important moments the role of the pope as a prince might never have existed—for example, when John Paul embraced a handicapped child in Japan, or when he told a crowd of peasants in the Philippines that the land belongs to the people, and is not to be used against their welfare for the profit of the rich. But these moments did not exist without contradiction. The effect of the trip was to reveal the papacy, and by extension the position of established authority in modern Catholicism, in all of its current ambivalence, with all of its strengths and weaknesses.

One of the strengths of Catholicism is that it is an international religion. Its international character has been enhanced by the fact that it is no longer attached to any particular state. Dorothy Day once called the seizure of the papal states by Italian revolutionaries an act of Divine

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Providence, and there is more than ironic humor in that idea. It is a nice paradox of power that the efficacy of Catholic involvement in Poland's recent movement towards a more humane, less dictatorial socialism would not have been possible if the Vatican were seen as one state among many, or if the Catholic church were a national church under the control of the state. The power of the church in recent years is in part a function of its internationalism, combined with its lack of the sort of power which can be backed up by police and armies.

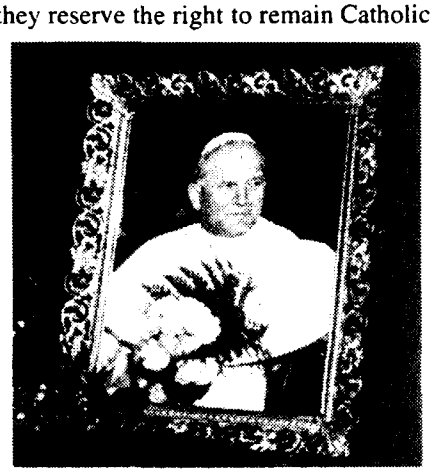
Secularism's gift to modern religion is the fact that religious traditions must now make sense in some way, or be abandoned. Catholicism must be persuasive to its adherents because it seems to be true and to have vital personal and social importance; it must persuade or it will not be listened to. In some countries and in some places social pressure still keeps people Catholic, but such places grow fewer every day. And no one really mourns that fact: social pressure was always a terrible reason for going to Mass. Now that the power of social pressure to be religious is waning, and now that the power of the state has been removed as a prop for religion, Catholicism is more free than it has been since the pre-Constantinian era to be itself.

Perhaps this is what has led recent popes to emphasize persuasive symbols. A rule by fiat will not work anymore. There is no way to make people accept a modern version of the Syllabus of Errors. Pius IX could, and did, excommunicate people who disagreed with him. If a modern pope tried to excommunicate someone he would be fought or ignored. Even in the disputes involving Hans Küng, to take the most recent public controversy, Rome's action was mild compared to what it certainly would have been before Vatican II.

For conservative Catholics there is no problem with papal authority: they believe that God from all eternity wished the pope of Rome to be the infallible leader of his church. The fact that this belief was declared essential to Catholic faith only during the middle of the nineteenth century, and that it was hardly the universal belief of the church during many periods of Christian history, does not make any impression on conservatives. For liberal Catholics the problem is different: they assume that the conservatives are wrong, and that no one really worries about the issue anymore. Or they see the issue of papal power as a sort of embarrassing leftover from the past, something time will take care of . . . all by itself, presumably, working in that abstract way time and history and evolution were believed to work by nineteenth century thinkers. (The labor of time, from this optimistic point of view, always moves in the direction of one's own notion of what is best.)

This point of view is insensitive to the importance which still attaches to the papacy, in the eyes of the world beyond Catholicism. The Orthodox churches pay attention to the way Rome deals with its bishops; Protestants look at the ways Rome responds to ideas it considers unorthodox, from the strictest curial point of view. And a number of observers, inside the church as well as outside of it, cannot help noticing that the papacy, which should be a symbol of the church's unity, is at times a reminder of Catholic division.

During his visit to the Philippines the pope once again brought up our boring old friend contraception. The fact that everyone concerned with this question has made up his mind about it is frequently seen as a reason to ignore it; but that is precisely the problem. The consensus of millions of laypeople and clergy is simply that the members of the hierarchy who back *Humanae Vitae* are wrong. The result of their decision is that they reserve the right to remain Catholic and disagree. Since we have come a sadly long way from the council of Jerusalem and since there is no way for Paul and Peter to argue, our dissidents must ignore the pope. It is all the choice Rome offers at present.



This means that whatever papal authority might be is inextricably entwined with what it insists on being—right, all the time, with no questions asked. So when John Paul II speaks out strongly about nuclear war at Hiroshima, when he embraces a handicapped child, when he tells an audience of Filipino peasants that land belongs to the people and is not to be used to enrich a few at the expense of the many, we are moved; but we cannot help associating these gestures and words with other things he has said, about sex and marriage, contraception, and the ordination of married men. Where he moves us it must be in a vague way, because dissent from his least authoritative ideas is not possible within the church, except the dissent which expresses itself by ignoring church authority. Married people know that he is wrong when he talks about contraception; liberation theologians know that he is wrong to separate the political and religious realms as easily as he does; Africans know he is wrong when in his remarks on monogamy he fails to take into account the frequently generous role polygamy plays in a culture built on extended families. The upshot of this is very little moral authority at all: militarists feel free to ignore his words about the arms race, and capitalists can dismiss what he says about profit.

It would not be pleasant to see the papacy reduced to an institution which can only generalize in a way calculated to please everyone; that wouldn't serve the cause of truth at all. But it is not possible for the pope to rein in the team the way he seems to want to. Since the papacy must persuade through symbols now, the symbols must be both powerful and consistent, and they do not appear to be either.

Indonesian bishops, for example, have requested permission to ordain married men. This request, which was denied, would probably never have happened before Vatican II, and the compliance of the

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bishops may not happen twenty years from now. The reason is obvious: unless missionary territories are provided with married priests, millions of Catholics will be unable to receive the Eucharist.

Here is where several symbols clash. John Paul has spoken of the importance of marriage, and at the same time he has spoken of married priests in terms that denigrate marriage. This is what is done when marriage is spoken of as something that must diminish the priesthood. John Paul has made moving and important gestures towards Eastern Orthodoxy, but to speak this insensitively of an ancient church tradition which the Orthodox take very seriously contradicts those gestures. There are a couple of other assumptions here which have not been well defended by Rome. One is that a discipline which even conservative theologians admit is not strictly speaking essential to the priesthood is made more important than the right of Catholics to receive the body and blood of Christ; this makes a discipline of the church more important than the command of Jesus to celebrate the Eucharist in his memory. The other is the belief that an evangelical charism given to a few is more important than a sacrament. As important as celibacy is, it is not a sacrament. It is more like lightning striking, a gift like prophecy. Celibacy was not attached to ordination in scripture or early church tradition. It is hard to see how defenders of an exclusively celibate priesthood can defend themselves from the charge of having defamed a sacrament when they speak of marriage diminishing the priesthood. Was Peter's leadership of the earliest Christian community diminished by his marriage?

We have hints of what the papacy could be and in some ways what it is when we see John Paul addressing the people of the world in their own languages, moving with obvious affection among crowds of children, speaking words which give hope to the poor. Because rule by fiat no longer works in the church this sort of symbolic authority is more important than ever. But the symbols must be more compelling than they have been. To speak of the obligation of the rich to the poor is certainly right, but it doesn't square with building a swimming pool in the Vatican. In this the pope is no different from most of us; but there is a danger that he will also seem no more authoritative than most of us. This is what I mean: Mother Teresa, talking about abortion, speaks with an authority which a comfortable middle-class pro-lifer simply does not have. Symbol and reality are one thing in her.

A few years ago Canon Drinkwater, writing in the London *Tablet*, compared Rome to a crazed government in exile, issuing orders to imaginary troops while the countryside lies in ruins. This is something of an exaggeration, but it has its truth. Church authority is in crisis, but the crisis will not be solved by an attempt to crack down, or to return to pre-Vatican II models of authority. The authority of the papacy must shine with a light reflected from the greater light of the whole church, to which the papacy frequently does not seem to be listening.

JOHN GARVEY

Of several minds: *Thomas Powers*

SPASM WAR

WILL BOTH SIDES SHOOT THE WORKS?

LAST FALL I went to see the deputy undersecretary of defense for strategic and space systems in the Office of the Undersecretary of Defense for Research and Engineering, a man with a crewcut and horn-rimmed glasses named Dr. Seymour Zeiberg. We talked about the MX missile complex which the Air Force wants to build in an area of central Nevada and Utah called the Great Basin. Dr. Zeiberg is a thoughtful man. He is not unmindful of the dangers of nuclear war, nor immune to moments of gloom. "When I feel like that I get away for awhile," he said, "take a ride in an airplane, go out to an Air Force base somewhere and kick a few tires."

Dr. Zeiberg thinks the MX is a good idea. I don't, for reasons which must have been apparent from the questions I asked. During World War II something under three million tons of conventional explosives were dropped by Allied bombers over Europe. The 2000 warheads of the MX system could deliver the equivalent of 700 million tons of conventional explosives. I suppose I must have sounded as if I thought the results would be 200 times worse than the results of WW II. Dr. Zeiberg takes a more relaxed view. He thought I had misconceived the probable course of any new war involving the MX or other modern strategic weapons systems. "You're too hung up on spasm war," he said. I've been thinking about this ever since.

"Spasm war" is a phrase invented by the civilian strategist and defense consultant, Herman Kahn. He used it to refer to an all-out, unrestrained, fire-everything war between the United States and the Soviet Union—in effect, a war of annihilation conducted in a mood which might be described as murderous and suicidal in about equal measure. American and Soviet strategic weapons systems are extraordinarily responsive to central direction. A single order by the president could fire all of the 1,052 land-based ICBMs within two or three minutes. It would take somewhat longer to fire the SLBMs from nuclear submarines because of communications difficulties. Nuclear weapons carried by conventional aircraft would take the longest of all, but even so the United States *could* deliver just about all of its warheads in less than twelve hours. The Soviets could do the same. This is what Kahn was referring to in the first instance—a brief, instinctive, unrestrained assault which would doubtless bring the same in return.

Dr. Zeiberg considers a spasm war very unlikely. Its consequences would of course be catastrophic, something well understood by the political leaders and military men of both sides. Even a first strike—that is, a Pearl Harbor type of

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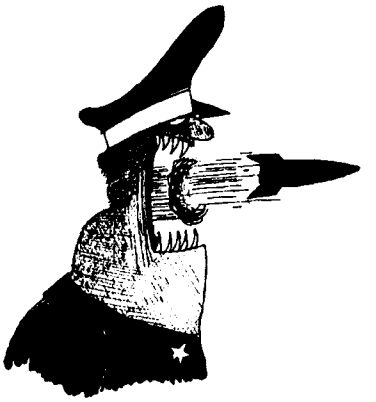
surprise attack on military targets—would probably be limited in the hope of mitigating the response. But the real point at issue here is not whether a substantial majority of our strategic weapons will be fired on the first day (a spasm war in its archetypal form), but whether the war will continue until they are pretty much used up. We might describe the latter as a spasmodic war—a succession of salvos, one wave of attacks eliciting another in response, as each side tried to bend the other to its will. In some respects this might be even worse than an all-out war, over in a day, if only because initial recovery efforts—the establishment of new hospitals, transportation centers, emergency tent cities, military rendezvous points, and the like—would offer new targets for attack.

The truth of the matter is that Dr. Zeiberg, like just about every other professional defense expert, does not expect any sort of nuclear exchange, ever—much less a spasm war—between the United States and the Soviet Union. If we can maintain at least a rough balance of forces then we can avoid war. This is why Dr. Zeiberg favors the MX. Like the rest of the defense community, he feels the best we can hope for is a Mexican stand-off.

But even if a war should begin—he does not know how this might happen; no more do I—Dr. Zeiberg thinks both sides would agree to call a halt in the war's early stages, not go all the way. I take a different view, and ever since our conversation I have been trying to figure out why.

Let me begin with a confession: I have no direct, personal experience of war. I never set foot in Vietnam. Once, in the biblical city of Tyre on the coast of southern Lebanon, a friend and I thought we heard artillery in the distance, but it was only a single, isolated boom in the night. Some years earlier, in Athens the night of the colonels' coup in 1967, my wife and I sat up late on a pleasant terrace, listening to occasional bursts of machinegun fire and wondering what was happening. Apparently very little; there were no reports of casualties the following day. Nor have I been in government—or in any large institution,



for that matter—at a moment of crisis. Tolstoy once said that anyone who has seen a street fight can understand a great battle. Whatever knowledge I have of war is of that sort, or comes from reading and from thinking about what I have read. The result is a notion of war quite different from that of Dr. Zeiberg.

Most writing about war treats it as the solution to a problem—the rational (albeit dangerous) pursuit of a tangible (albeit arguable) goal. But this does not explain why so many possible occasions for war are passed up, nor why the fighting is so hard to stop once begun. Clearly war has its rational side, but this is limited to the mechanics of military operations. It is like chess in more ways than one; the way it is played determines who will win, but has nothing to do with the larger question—why the game is undertaken in the first place. So it is with war. The techniques of combat reveal little about the spirit of combat, which exists on a different plane. That spirit is not easy to put down.

Perhaps the first thing to be said of big modern wars—and in particular of the two great wars of our century—is that their violence has been dramatically out of proportion to their original goals. The First World War began in a hopeless muddle of aims—the confused desire, on both sides, to emerge from a conflict of will over a trivial matter with that enhancement of prestige, that aura of confident strength, which comes from getting your way with everybody watching. Either side might have backed down without an iota of diminishment of tangible strength. The same might be said of the conflict over Poland in 1939. The fate of neither Poland nor the Balkans can plausibly be said to have justified the immense suffering, death, and destruction of the wars for which they served as occasion.

An occasion is just that—a moment for beginning, not a reason for carrying on to the end. Once the belligerents have joined in combat the occasion fades in significance and the struggle itself becomes paramount. Clausewitz defines the object of military operations as destruction of the enemy's capacity to fight. Once that is achieved all else follows. The victor has the luxury of deciding what the war was about after it is over.

But in modern wars the prize—territory, reparations, access to material resources—is dwarfed by the cost of winning it. The real object of war seems to be something quite different, an end to the threat posed by hostile arms. In theory arms are acquired in order to defend something one has got, but arms cannot defend without threatening. Arms, in short, are both cause and result of arms. It is tough enough to live in fear of arms in peacetime. In war the threat becomes actual, and is more than the spirit can bear. Thus a war which might begin over something small—a bullying reply to a diplomatic note; title to a chunk of Central Europe—tends toward an open-ended struggle to free oneself from the threat of arms by destroying them. When whole societies have been devoted to preparation for war we can expect conflict to be on a commensurate scale. About the only thing one might hope to gain from such a war is freedom from the fear of having to go through it again. The oil of the Persian Gulf might serve as an occasion for war between the United States and the Soviet Union, but that isn't what it would be *about*. In war ontology is everything. Their beginnings have one kind of logic, their ends another. It is weapons which threaten us, and weapons which we fight to destroy. We might say that the reason wars are fought—as opposed to the reason they begin—is to see who will be left with weapons at the end.

The second thing we might say about big modern wars is they do not end when one side surrenders, but when one side is beaten. During the First World War Ber-

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trand Russell was briefly sent to jail for having suggested that the war couldn't possibly win anything worth the sacrifice involved, and that it ought to be ended immediately on any terms available. This was a sensible suggestion. The four great belligerents—Britain, France, Russia and Germany—all but destroyed themselves for what amounted in the end to illusory reparations, an illusory hegemony in Europe, minor colonial acquisitions, and inconsequential changes in European frontiers. Russia, of course, gained nothing at all—not even illusions. In terms of money, the war was merely ruinous. In terms of life, it beggared the horrors of history. Whole generations of young men were cut in half. Thus began the darkening of the modern mind. But with all these excellent reasons for halting the war in mid-battle, no leader on either side ever seriously suggested doing so. Even at the very end the Germans could not bring themselves to surrender, but dithered until a revolution at home settled the matter.

The Second World War was even more replete with opportunities for surrender. No one did so. Even France waited until it was clear its army was incapable of fighting before accepting an armistice. Britain had no hope of winning in June, 1940, but she did not surrender. Russia seemed all but beaten in the late summer of 1941, but did not surrender. Germany and Japan were both beaten by the end of 1944. Neither surrendered. The losers were beaten—hammered down until they could fight no longer. The logic of war seems to be that if a belligerent can fight he will fight, that leaders will not surrender until surrender is academic. This appears to be a corollary of the immense cost of modern war. Victory may be ashes, but at least it is *something*. How is a national leader to explain the sacrifice of so much for *nothing*? It is more than they can bring themselves to do. The loss of cities and armies is not taken as reason for quitting, but as reason for risking the rest.

The military is asked, Must we surrender today? The military answers, No, not today, we are not beaten yet. Time foreshortens terribly. The psychology is that of the man condemned to be hanged,

described by Dostoevsky. It is the moment the condemned man dreads. *Not yet*, he tells himself the night before his last day. *Not yet*, he says in the morning. *Not yet*, as the hour draws near. *Not yet*, as he is led to the door. *Not yet*, as he reaches the stair to the scaffold. *Not yet*, when there is still one step to climb. A man does not have to die until the noose draws tight. A nation does not have to surrender until it is beaten. The awful cost of war is reason to shrink back before it begins; afterwards, it serves as goad.

The third major characteristic of big wars in our century has been their level of gratuitous destruction. The ghastly loss of life in combat during the First World War was not repeated in the Second, but civilian casualties increased enormously. Big Bertha, the huge German railroad gun which fired on Paris in 1918, scared more people than it injured. Civilian bombardment in WWII was on an altogether different scale. Whole cities were destroyed in an attempt to break civilian morale. The approach did not work. Bombing rallied Britain in 1940-41, and had the same effect in Germany thereafter. The practical reasons for strategic bombing, as it was called, were two: air defenses were too effective by day, and cities were the only targets big enough to find at night. But the infliction of pain on this scale is hard to understand as anything except a response to anger, suffering, and frustration—all of which are in the nature of war. Nuclear weapons, of course, offer an ideal means for inflicting pain. Cities are the one target which cannot become lost in the confusion of war. We might sum up, then, by saying that big modern wars are violent out of all proportion to goals, are fought to the bitter end, and encourage gratuitous destruction.

What does this suggest about the course of a war between the United States and the Soviet Union? Both sides are armed, and threaten each other, beyond all precedent. The cost would be great from the opening shot. Other belligerents—especially China and West Germany—might enter the war at an early stage. The United States assumes it would lose a conventional war without recourse to nuclear weapons. We may take it as a given that the occasion for war would be a substantial one—access to oil in the Persian Gulf, perhaps. We may assume that one side had committed itself to X, and the other to resisting X. Could either side lightly drop its commitment once the shooting started? Would either side be in a mood for compromise once the shooting had already cost more than X was worth?

It is possible that one side or the other, reading the logic of the situation in a cold light, would abandon all restraint and reach for whatever advantage is to be obtained from a sudden, spasmic firing of everything in its arsenal. But this strikes me as unlikely. In my imagination—and at this point imagination is all any of us has to go on—the war follows a different course. One act of destruction elicits another. Fleets and armies are destroyed. Panic spreads, communications are strained, confusion rises. Things happen quickly; there is no time to think. The leaders of neither side can bear to have lost so much for *nothing*. And yet the horror is all contained in messages on bits of paper. The loss of an entire city, unimaginable before the war, still leaves many others. The war does not *have* to end now.

The arsenals we have built are very great. Once the war had begun in earnest—once we had truly begun to suffer—it seems to me the shooting would continue in spasmodic waves until technological exhaustion asserted itself, and we could no longer get at each other. What else are those weapons *for*? But as I say, Dr. Zeiberg thinks otherwise, and God willing, he'll turn out to be right.

THOMAS POWERS

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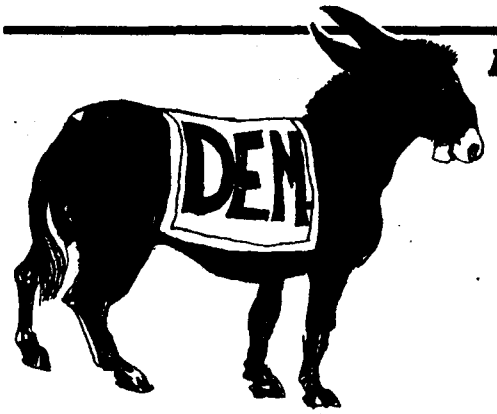

What the Democrats should do

JIM CHAPIN

WHAT SHOULD the Democrats do now? In some ways it's an odd question. Although Ronald Reagan defeated Jimmy Carter in a landslide, the Democrats hold a higher percentage of elected offices now than they did in 1952 or 1968, the last two times they turned power over to the other party. They are the first party this century to retain a majority of the nation's governorships in the year that the other party gained the presidency. And even the least favorable national poll still shows them with an eleven percent lead in party identification over the Republicans.

The Democratic percentage of the *two-party* presidential vote last year (i.e., not counting third or fourth party returns) was almost the same as that of Stevenson in 1952. And Eisenhower's coattails that year were far longer than Reagan's this time. In 1952 the Republicans did not seriously contest the quarter of the congressional seats in the South, but they swept two-thirds of the remaining House seats. Nothing like that happened this time, even though the Republicans now hold a fair share of Southern seats.

Reagan's sweep helped the Republicans gain twelve Senate seats and a majority in that chamber, but their party actually received a *minority* of the votes cast nationwide for senators. Republican victories partly reflected the fact that the Senate is the last bastion in America of rotten-borough politics, so that the twenty Republican Senate seats out of the thirty from the fifteen least populous states in the Union more than cancel the thirteen Democratic seats out of the twenty from the ten most populous states.

Is this new Congress conservative? Yes, it is. But it is far less conservative than the string of Congresses in the years 1946-58. Even the shrunken liberal bloc in the Senate compares favorably in size to the tiny remnant of Senate liberals left in the early 1950s.

On the face of it, then, the troubles of the Democratic party look far less than the media has been making of them. But the general perception that the Democrats are in trouble *is* accurate all the same. That an incumbent president was defeated by *such* a margin at this particular moment was indeed significant. For, despite all the cries of crisis, it must surely be admitted that the troubles, economic and otherwise, of the American people are slight compared to those which led to the similar defeat of Herbert Hoover in 1932. It is significant that the Republicans will almost certainly control the Senate for at least the first half of this decade, and even more significant that unabashed conservatives now control *all* the major national institutions (president, Congress, Supreme Court) for the first time since 1954 and perhaps 1930.

This new state of affairs has led to an odd reversal of roles. The last defense of old-time liberals, it seems, is their claim that government can't really change all that much in American life, anyway, and that "reality" will overcome Reagan. The nature of this argument is a rather odd one for a self-professed "liberal" to use, and one that reminds us again that liberalism as a serious political force on the national level seems to have vanished somewhere in the early years of the Carter administration. Conservatives, on the other hand, seem now to be suggesting that what in fact will turn out to be relatively marginal shifts in the allocation of government spending and in its size (as Russell Baker pointed out, Reagan proposes to cut that 67-mile pile of thousand-dollar bills to something like 64½ miles) will somehow bring a new paradise. (Yes, the poor will be squeezed and the rich will get more subsidies, but there's little new in *that*.) In fact, it will soon be the conservatives who will be muttering "radical" complaints that even though they have just about *all* the power, somehow it still isn't *quite enough* to do all the good things they could do if only they had a *little more*.

Why are the Democrats in trouble? Well, first, a purely personal factor. Ronald Reagan appears to be the first president since John F. Kennedy who knows that public speech and

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the projection of the likable *persona* are the keys to the modern presidency. Second, the Democrats are now facing a Republican party which is largely united around the propositions put forward by Senator Goldwater in 1964 as to economic and defense policy, while the Democratic party itself has no such consensus.

The media are arguing that there is a division in *both* parties between "pragmatists" and "ideologues," represented in the one party by, say, Baker and Helms, and in the other by, for example, Tsongas and Kennedy. In fact, there is no such division. The basic propositions of the "moderate" or "pragmatic" wing of the Republican party of 1980 are the *same* as the propositions which the media labeled "ideological" as against the "pragmatism" of Rockefeller in 1964. Carter's politics last year were labeled "pragmatic" as against the "ideological" positions of Kennedy. On the face of it, there was *nothing* pragmatic about Rockefeller's politics, either by the standard of winning national elections or of carrying out effective policies, and certainly nothing pragmatic about Carter's politics by either standard (i.e., he neither won re-election nor made a dent in the nation's economic troubles). In fact, it is a long-standing weakness of those who run the national media to label those *positions* they happen to share (conservative economics, liberal social policy) as being "pragmatic" and those with which they happen to disagree as being "ideological."

Jesse Helms is of course an "ideologue," but like his fellow "ideologue" senator from South Carolina, Strom Thurmond, he has shown throughout his political life in North Carolina a very good ability to forge ahead in mainstream politics. Pushing "social issues" has been an important glue for the New Right, and the thrust of the New Right has not been an unimportant contributing factor to the new Republican position. Consider: in the 1960s there was no consistent *Republican* position on such issues as the death penalty, abortion, etc. Now the vast majority of elected Republicans at *all* levels of government have similar positions as supporters of the Human Life Amendment and the death penalty.

Contrast the thrust of this active group to the dull pragmatic group of Republicans who (like the last four "pragmatic" presidents) have mostly been losing their elective positions: Brooke, Javits, et. al.

The Democrats, we are told, now face a choice between "ideological" and "pragmatic" politics. They must recognize the "new realities." We are not often told what these "new realities" are and how to distinguish them from "old" realities. We can quickly dismiss the "insights" of people like Paul Tsongas, whose "new liberalism" so far seems indistinguishable from the old conservatism: to be specific, unions should sign productivity contracts, oil profits are o.k., we need nuclear power, Bella Abzug is bad (not "pragmatic"). A slightly more humane version of conservatism not only won't work economically but has no political appeal. Surely Carter's performance demonstrated this "pragmatically."

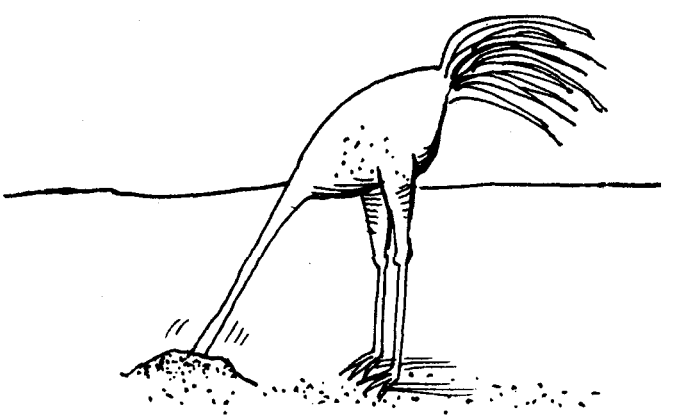
What else remains? Of the potential presidential candidates, Walter Mondale seems to be offering an uneasy mixture of Tsongas, Carter, and old-style liberalism. The Left Democrats are in disarray, lacking a clear spokesperson or a clear program. It is to some degree uncertain why this is so. The materials for such a program are everywhere to hand; but Ted Kennedy, the man who might clearly and strongly articulate such a program, seems oddly astraddle the old and the new. His defense of Great Society programs seems more elegaic than practical in tone; he seems more comfortable personally with the worst specimens of "old politics" rather than with any popularly-based movement; and many of the bright young men around him feel the same pressures to be "pragmatic" that other people of their class do, and want to show that Teddy is in favor of deregulation, a new crime bill, etc. These "pragmatic" advisers masterminded the issueless first two months of the Kennedy campaign that took him from sixty percent to thirty percent in the Democratic polls.

It could be possible to integrate new themes, such as reindustrialization and environmentalism, into a coherent program of positive government action. The presidential possibility on the Democratic side who seems most aware of this possibility is Jerry Brown. Unfortunately, Brown has isolated himself from key left constituencies by his support of the budget-balancing constitutional amendment and by the cultural gap between his style (the man who seems to believe that *everything* is process) and that especially of Easterners. (As one Eastern left-wing woman said of Brown, "Just because you're crazy doesn't mean you're one of us.")

If none of the major presidential candidates can necessarily be expected to be sources of new ideas, what about Congress? So far, the Democratic leadership there decided which of all the programs that Reagan wanted to cut was most vital: synthetic fuels. That decision alone shows much of what has been wrong with the Washington Democrats for the last few years. There is hardly any major constituency in the country that cares about synthetic fuels: it was a politically (not to mention morally) bad choice.

The job of the Democrats in Congress is not an easy one. They cannot be seen to be obstructing the Reagan program, which must be given a "fair chance." (It is not clear that there is enough strength or will among congressional Democrats to oppose Reagan in any event, but they cannot allow Reagan to blame his failures on their non-cooperation.)

In this respect, Byrd in the Senate has an easier job than



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O'Neill in the House. He is clearly in the minority. So his duty is to hold his party together at all costs to vote as a bloc as much as possible in a way to exacerbate Republican divisions. The masterful example here is the performance of LBJ as Senate minority leader when last the Democrats were in a minority (1953-4). He offered ostentatious support to Ike, who didn't really need it, at the same time doing his best to cut the GOP president off at the knees when no one was looking. By 1954, after the death of Taft and the performance of McCarthy, it was possible for Johnson to get a nearly unanimous vote (absent only John Kennedy — "more profile than courage") against McCarthy. In 1954 the Democrats recaptured Congress.

O'Neill has the problem of a paper majority, since the thirty-five or so most conservative House Democrats, now an informal caucus, really control the key votes in the House. So, though he has moved to increase the representation of Southern conservative Democrats on key committees, he has satisfied neither wing of his theoretical majority. He has the appearance of power without its reality.

There has been much talk in the last decade or so about the erosion of the power of congressional leaders as well as of presidents. Reagan seems to be demonstrating that the decline of the presidency is overstated; perhaps the same may be true of congressional leaders — we should remember that Mansfield, Byrd, McCormack, Albert, and O'Neill have none of them been a great congressional leader. At the best, then, we can expect Congress to provide a masterful delaying and cutting job on the worst Reagan excesses. The problem that the Democrats face is that it is hard to find issues where they can draw solid *party* lines. Resistance to the "Moral Majority" aspects of the Republican party — with the major exception of abortion — unites almost all Democrats. Opposition to Republican efforts to repeal environmental, civil-rights, and social programs unites most Northern Democrats, but the Southerners go their own way on these questions. And if Reagan starts the country on an anti-Communist crusade, in which El Salvador is only the first salvo, he will find neoconservatives like Jackson and Moynihan (not to mention their allies in his own administration like Jeanne Kirkpatrick) marching right with him.

WHAT ABOUT the Democratic National Committee and the party structure? A number of saving formulas have emerged: the party reforms have "gone too far," the Democrats need expertise on the technical side, they need to have a wider fund-raising base, and they must again become "the party of ideas." Almost all these formulae are either wrong or they beg the question.

The party reforms are a symptom, not a cause, of the Democrats' political problem. The last four Democratic presidential candidacies include two (Humphrey in 1968 and incumbent President Carter in 1980) who most certainly would have been nominated under an unreformed system and two (McGovern in 1972 and Carter in 1976) whose nominations can clearly be laid at the door of the "new" political rules.

But Humphrey in 1968 was a weaker candidate than Gene McCarthy would have been, while *any* candidate (not just McGovern) would have lost in 1972; Carter was the *only* Democrat who could have won the 1976 election, and Carter was certainly one of the weaker candidates the Democrats could have put forward in 1980. So if "pragmatism" is defined as picking the winner, there's no evidence that party bosses did better in 1968 and 1980 than the party electorate did in 1972 and 1976.

The discussion about the technical side of politics has taken on a tone — classically American — which separates technique from ideas. It sometimes seems that the new liberal idol is the great god PAC (Political Action Committee). But the Republican's advantage in fundraising — both from small sources and large sources — is not just an artifact of the campaign laws and is not just technical. In a politics which is largely, and increasingly, conducted without the lower classes, the party of the Right has a number of built-in advantages.

First, the Republicans get the majority of corporate money, as they have since the Civil War. Second, they have a larger core of motivated middle-class activists (as true in 1940 or 1952 as today). Finally, since at least the Goldwater campaign of 1964, they have developed a far larger group of small givers than the Democrats have. (It should be remembered that the average giver of "small" sums — $10 to a few hundred or so — is still someone from the top ten percent of the American income structure.) In fact, only in the election of 1972 have the Democrats come near matching the Republicans in "small" contributions.

Technical expertise in modern politics depends upon money. Money depends on your politics. You get corporate money if you have corporate politics, but there's no way the Democrats can ever compete with Republicans on this score, especially because following the same corporate priorities loses them a good proportion of their voters. You get small contributors by having politics that appeal to them, above all issue-oriented politics.

The Republican appeals mesh with the central thrust of a capitalist individualist society dominated by the media, and in that sense these appeals are easy to write and easy to believe. We often overlook that the most successful "New" politician in America is Ronald Reagan. The image of the America to which we want to return is the image purveyed by Hollywood in the 1930s and 1940s of a small town America of John Wayne, Jimmy Stewart, and Shirley Temple (not coincidentally, all conservative Republicans). The bastion of this politics was Southern California, the "newest" part of the country.

The social linkages for this atomized society are media images of community. One is reminded of a phrase by a member of Total Womanhood a few years ago who was attacking Norman Lear's TV shows as presenting an unreal image of the American family.

"American families were different," she said.

"How?"

"Well, you know, like a Doris Day movie!"

Traditionally, Democrats matched the Republican advan-

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tages with the power of unions and political organizations (both weakened by TV), traditional ethnic affiliations (Catholics, Jews, blacks, Southerners), and the rising support of the educated classes. But as at least the white population *is* melting into a suburban media-dominated culture, traditional Democratic affiliations are vanishing or weakening.

Finding issues that attract contributors is not hard. But the choice of those issues means you make enemies. What should they be: peace, environment, stop the Moral Majority, left economic issues?

Most likely the Democratic leadership will try to say "none of the above" or "a little bit of all the above"; but that's not a luxury their party has any more. What is most likely and most necessary is that some group or groups within the party will develop and push a new agenda — perhaps at the Democratic midterm convention in 1982. They should not be surprised if the Democrats in Congress say "no" to their program at first and if the media say it's not "pragmatic." The same people who complain that the Democrats have no ideas will be most vigilant in attacking any ideas they do develop as outside their limited assumptions for American politics. But it is possible, as Reagan has demonstrated, for continuous activism around an agenda to finally *become* part of their mainstream.

SO INTELLIGENT Democratic strategy at different levels of the party would be something like this:

1. At the senatorial level, a consciously *minoritarian* strategy that stresses voting as a bloc in ways designed to splinter the Republican majority. The Republicans have the majority, as they used to say to the Democrats: it's their job to find the votes to govern.

2. In the House, if the paper Democratic majority is not a real one, *admit it*. Put the thirty-five conservative Democrats to the test — either they are primarily conservatives or they are primarily Democrats. This does *not* mean that you follow an all-out liberal course and start expelling people who don't toe the line; but it does mean that on issues that involve the basic integrity of the Democratic coalition, members have to make a choice. If their choices are Republican choices, let them go to the Republicans. Clinging ignominiously to the tatters of the robes of power is the best way to lose even those tatters.

"I see the cuts have affected you."

3. At the Democratic National Committee, *choices* must be made. Bland general appeals for the party are *not* pragmatic. Working within the range of positions enjoying healthy majority support (say, at the midterm convention), sample a wide variety of direct fundraising appeals with different themes and different signers. Whichever ones *work* would become the thrust of party fundraising, even though some ox of a party minority will be gored. The Democrats have to learn to abandon the habits of an automatic majority party (consensual blur), or they won't be a majority party much longer.

4. For the leaders running for president, articulate clear alternatives *now*. Not detailed alternatives, just clear ones. Take the chance that Reagan's politics won't work, and say what *you* would do in power. Whatever it is, it had better not be a watered-down version of Carter's "pragmatism" (at least on economic issues) or "Reaganism with a human face." Whether Reagan's politics succeed *or* fail, such an alternative-that-is-no-alternative will not sell. Even if the worst is true, and Reagan's politics begin a new alignment, remember that the minority party usually takes command of the political system (either directly or in terms of the drift of national policy) halfway through an alignment.

Sixteen years after Jefferson's victory for agrarian democracy in 1800, came the neo-Federalist Monroe administration (a tariff, big navy, National Bank, internal improvements). Twelve years after Jackson's election in '28, the opposition Whigs, led by "Old Tippecanoe" William Henry Harrison, swept to power. Sixteen years after McKinley's 1896 election Progressivism and Woodrow Wilson were in the saddle. And fourteen years after FDR and the New Deal came the elections of 1946, which opened a dozen years of Cold War conservatism in which the dominant national figures were Senator Joseph McCarthy and President Dwight D. Eisenhower.

So even if there does emerge a new Republican majority, the Democrats should remember the history of Reagan himself from 1964 to 1980.

5. For activists in the countryside, in the words of William Seward: "Organize organize organize." Half the American electorate is not voting. What about the minorities, the eighty percent of the workforce that is not now unionized, the expanding "pink-collar workforce"? What about the fact that the plans of the Moral Majority alienate large proportions of the politically active middle classes, that the economic program of the Reaganites writes off nearly half the country, that their racial and linguistic biases alienate groups which will be the majority of the California population before the end of the century, and that their foreign policy runs the risk of once again sending American boys to die in foreign climes? Whether Reagan's politics result in successful realignment or not, a realignment does not end history.

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Paul & Apollo

JORDAN BISHOP

IT IS DIFFICULT to discuss the problems of the church in areas such as Bolivia or Peru. It is almost impossible to discuss the problems of the church in all of Latin America, although theologians and pastors from every end of the theological spectrum have spent a lot of time and a lot of ink doing it over the past thirty years. Yet the problems remain.

In the mid-sixties, as the Vatican Council ended and many Catholics in Latin America were filled with hopes that some real changes might be achieved, I listened with some fascination to an American priest discussing the advantages of a permanent diaconate. The priest in question, originally from a diocese in the Eastern United States, worked in a rural parish in Bolivia, covering an area about the size of Long Island, with a population of less than two thousand. There were thirty or forty small communities in the parish, some of which could be reached in the dry season with a four-wheel-drive vehicle. In that part of the world, such situations are common.

"They've got it all wrong," he said. "The deacons should be celibate, well-trained, full-time servants of the church. They should be the circuit-riders who keep isolated parishes and communities in touch with the bishop and with the church at large. The married men with roots in the community who work for a living like everyone else should be ordained to the priesthood, to celebrate the Eucharist on Sunday and baptize and marry and other functions of the traditional ministry in the church. The problem is that theologians and ecclesiastical administrators lack imagination."

If there are difficulties with this vision of the church they are not, I think, those that would be envisioned by conservative theologians and administrators. Circuit-riding deacons — or for that matter other circuit-riding priests — could attend to the ministry of the word, organize and supervise cathechesis and provide some continuity in discipline, while the local priests would ensure the survival of the traditional church. There would, I think, be no difficulty on the part of the people in accepting a married clergy. In some parts, they have accepted them for centuries. A few years back the people of one such parish did complain to the bishop about a priest — not because he had been faithful to one woman for twenty years, but because he had raised the fees for religious functions. Whether they would accept — married or celibate — a member of their own community as a priest is another question.

There is a long tradition of priests being, by definition as it were, outsiders, wrenched from their communities at an early age and systematically alienated from the culture of those communities in a Tridentine seminary. Even the fact that they would have to be taught to read and write would tend to set them apart from their communities. In Bolivia, with a fifth of the population living in six major cities, illiteracy is still reckoned at seventy percent, and many of them have only a rudimentary knowledge of Spanish. In the highlands, the liturgy would have to be celebrated in Aymara or Qeshua. Officially-approved Spanish texts are as far from the understanding of people in these communities as Latin was to most Catholics before Vatican II. Some do learn it in school, but unless they maintain contact with the towns it is soon forgotten. More learn it as a language of trade, but keep their own language for curses and endearments and the everyday world of the community.

On the other hand, seminary-educated priests who came to ground in such rural parishes tended to adapt very well to the culture of the people and to a sort of supply-and-demand pastoral activity. If they remembered the Tridentine theology served up in the seminary, it was reserved for formal discussion with the bishop and other priests on rare visits to a city or town. For the most part, their religious world was defined by the popular religion of the people whose life they shared, and if in some cases the sharing included a woman to live with the people were contented with that, since it tended to ensure the permanent presence of a priest in the community. Those with larger ambitions — a city parish or perhaps a miter — did not remain in rural communities. As in the Greek church, bishops were elected from the ranks of the celibate.

It is true that this might tend to establish two classes of clergy. In fact, the traditional church in these areas also had two classes of clergy, even aside from the question of the observance of celibacy. One could argue that if religious were included there were many classes of clergy, with a variety of specialized functions in the church. The problem of imagination exists when only one such class or kind of clergy is deemed to exist. In an imaginatively structured church there probably should be many kinds of priests as well as many kinds

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of deacons, a variety of ministries for a variety of needs. The kind of abstraction that equated all priests, all religious orders, all ministries should have disappeared with the Council.

THE BIGGEST difficulty with the priest's proposal is probably that it would ensure the survival of the folk religion that characterizes the traditional rural church in the Andes. A married priest with roots in the community would be even less given to change than the present rural clergy. Yet one should not attempt to outguess the Holy Spirit. I know of one traditional priest, educated in a traditional seminary but fluent in Aymara, who for a number of years carried out a remarkable pastoral mission, appointing men in local communities to positions of responsibility through what amounted to the inventing of new "minor orders" to meet community needs, preaching in season and out in the Aymara language, celebrating the liturgy in that language, taking as his starting point the folk religion and the culture of the people rather than attempting to impose the alien religious culture of Europe or North America on the people.

At this stage, it is difficult to predict the long-term results of this kind of pastoral imagination, and this imaginative priest was very nearly alone in his pastoral approach. All too often such initiatives are not undertaken, either because of a failure of imagination, or because of a fear of the reaction of ecclesiastical administrators.

At the same time, it might be asked why we, European or North American theologians, should sit in harsh judgment on that folk religion, as if our folk religion were the only pure or normative form of Christianity. A critique of this religion is probably doomed to failure unless it emerges from prophetic voices within those local churches, and these voices are not lacking. It is true that unimaginative and bureaucratic structures often prevent the emergence of such voices, through intimidation, economic pressures, even at times the old device of kicking upstairs, which may not succeed in silencing a prophetic voice, but may well succeed in removing that voice from the scene of action.

It is not simply a question of a "shortage" of priests, or the fact that foreign clergy now outnumber local clergy in some Andean regions. The missionary priest in such a situation is overwhelmed by the popular demand for ritual activity, which includes not only the sacraments of the church but a myriad of "responsos," or ritual prayers for particular needs, blessings, processions on feast-days, and the like. Given the situation, circuit-riding priests often find that the only time they can spend in a community is when they are in real, urgent demand by the people: during the celebration of the annual patronal feast. On these occasions, religious celebrations are often followed by a ritual three-day or week-long drinking bout that has deep roots in the culture since the Inca Empire. This itself may be misinterpreted by moralizing European or North American clergy — for the Incas it apparently had a religious significance, and outside of *fiesta* time very little drinking is done.

Whatever might be said of the place of alcohol in the *fiesta*, the *fiesta* is not a scene conducive to any serious dedication to the ministry of the word. But the priest, if he is to maintain the good will and acceptance of the people in rural communities, must be there for the *fiesta*. The patron saints assigned to the communities centuries ago by Spanish missionaries were selected in a pattern that made this possible. It was perhaps better than nothing, but for a missionary presence it is not enough.

Thus the establishment of priests in the communities would free the circuit-riders for another dimension of pastoral or missionary activity: for preaching, for catechesis, for the whole range of contemporary pastoral activity that is not possible under present circumstances. Even from the most traditional notion of pastoral activity, it would provide for the celebration of the Eucharist and the sacraments during the ordinary course of the year, rather than simply at *fiesta* time. For many of these communities, this has never been done. The feast days themselves were distributed to allow traveling priests to reach outlying communities at least once a year. And while contemporary missioners may often be able to use wheeled vehicles instead of horses, mules, or shank's mare, it is still nearly impossible to maintain any sustained effort in these communities.

For some missioners, the system as it works has proven to be an almost insurmountable obstacle. One priest from Quebec, who has since returned to Canada, put it this way: "My whole work here is fraudulent. The people here have a different religion than mine, and I cannot believe in it. They think that their religion is my religion. It is not, and I deceive them by pretending that it is." It was not that he thought he should impose his French-Canadian Catholicism on the Aymara people. But the gap between his religion and the folk Catholicism of the Aymara was too great.

Enrique Dussel, an Argentine historian and theologian, has written extensively about the problem of evangelization in Latin America. And for Dussel, evangelization must eventually be realized from within a culture. Outsiders, like Paul, can plant, but Apollo must water. Without serious and imaginative structural change, the impossible situation that faces missionaries will remain, until the next General Council, and beyond it.

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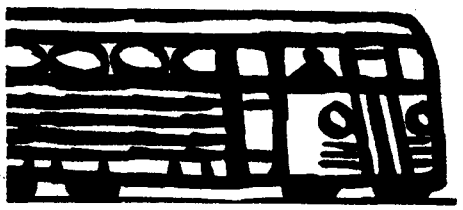

Making (some) busing work

J. S. FUERST

WHAT ATTITUDE WILL the Reagan administration take toward busing? A good many Americans are waiting, some anxiously, some hopefully, for the answer. Yet a changed approach toward busing may have already been signaled last year when, on President Carter's orders, the school desegregation logjam between the Chicago Board of Education and the U.S. Departments of Justice and Education was broken. The exact terms of the settlement were not spelled out; but undoubtedly the fact that the Chicago board is chaired by Ken Smith, a prominent black minister, and has a majority of black and Spanish-speaking members gave the Department of Justice confidence that the desegregation program to be worked out would not be unacceptable to the courts or the federal government. The breaking of the Chicago logjam is vitally important if it means that the federal government has recognized it cannot pursue the kind of busing program the Department of Education has tried to push during the last few years. This federal program has aimed at desegregating all big-city schools by trying, through cross-city busing of whites to black schools and blacks to white schools, to achieve in every school a racial mix approaching that of the school system as a whole. It has attempted to do this with no reference to the present quality of black schools nor to the effect this busing will have on white parents required to send their children to those black schools that currently have significantly poorer performance levels.

In the absence of numerous other measures, especially economic ones, that would maintain the civil-rights momentum of the sixties, so much attention has focused on busing (as on affirmative action) that it has often come to be seen as a yes-or-no, for-or-against issue. But the truth about busing is not simple. One can reasonably assert the following propositions:

1. *Busing can and does work.* It can achieve the social goal of racial integration. It can achieve the educational goals of raising reading scores of black children bused out of poorer schools without diminishing the educational performance of previously white schools which are part of a busing program.

2. *Not all busing works.* Certain patterns of busing simply seem to be self-defeating: the busing of white children into black schools where whites will be a minority; the busing of too large a percentage of black children into white schools; busing where receiving schools are not prepared. At the least, education is not enhanced; more important, white children are withdrawn from the school system—which makes integration impossible.

3. *Americans, both black and white, entertain considerable doubts about busing.* In many cases these doubts may have a racist component; but they also involve other attachments and fears, about neighborhoods, educational quality, and safety. A recent Gallup poll showed that while many blacks expressed qualified approval of busing, over half believed that it "has caused more difficulties than it is worth." Doubts and fears about busing are not going to go away tomorrow, and they must be taken into account when desegregation plans are designed.

4. *Busing is not the only educational strategy that works, nor can it be expected to carry the full burden of overcoming the educational disadvantages suffered by black Americans.* Schools that are all black, or predominantly black, can be, and must be, sharply improved. There are models of successful all-black schools to be built upon—although their successes are clearly linked to improving economic opportunities for blacks and other minorities.

With these propositions in mind, let us look specifically at the Chicago school situation, one that is duplicated in many other places. Chicago has 180,000 black children in its primary schools, 70,000 white children, and 80,000 Spanish-American youngsters. Integration of schools on an across-the-board basis has to mean not only that black children in large numbers are placed in all-white schools but also that *most* white children will be taken out of their schools and placed in what are at this moment inferior schools where they will form a substantial minority.

Integrated schools on this basis have been promulgated by HEW, for the last several years, and by the U.S. Supreme Court, at least in three of the recent majority opinions (Dallas, Cleveland, and Wilmington) where the District Court's breaking up of all-black schools in all-black neighborhoods has been upheld. But Justices Powell, Rehnquist, and Stewart have repeatedly indicated in dissenting opinions, while *Brown* v. *Board of Education* upheld the rights of black and other minority children to an equal education, decreeing that America's

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version of "apartheid" should be eradicated, it did not, nor could it, abrogate the right of people to move where they wanted or to send their children to private schools of their choice. In the Dallas case, as well as in the Columbus and Dayton cases, Judge Powell explicitly pointed out that the greatest limitation on attempts to place masses of white children in all-black schools is simply that the white parents will exercise their right to take their children out of the system. Similarly, *too many* black children in the white schools can have the same effect.

This parental right cannot be ignored. Many of the attempts in the big cities to desegregate the schools by extensive cross busing of white children to black schools, and black children to white schools, has, in fact, resulted in massive flight of white families to the suburbs and to private schools. This has been the case in Detroit, Pasadena, Cleveland, and St. Louis.

Probably the most poignant example of this occurred in Milwaukee despite the efforts of an enlightened federal judge and an equally enlightened education administration, plus a more or less acquiescent population. A recent study at Loyola University of Chicago reveals the preliminary results of considerable cross busing in an attempt to achieve racial balance. After 1976 court orders, virtually no schools contained less than ten percent blacks, and most had a considerably higher percentage. However, Milwaukee has been wise enough not to bus more than a few white youngsters from their good schools to poor-performing black schools — something that the courts and federal departments have insisted must be done in many other cities, with catastrophic results.

In spite of Milwaukee's relatively cautious approach, in all schools except those where the racial mix of the school population was less than twenty-five percent black and the remainder white, there has been substantial white flight — and a forty-six percent decline of white students in the overall system, plus a corresponding decline in reading and math scores in schools with massive increases in black students. It must be noted that in both Milwaukee and Chicago (which has carried on a limited busing program for black children for some ten years) when previously all-white schools have received black children up to fifteen to twenty percent of the school population, little white flight has occurred nor was there any decline of reading or mathematics scores. In short, there have been no significant changes in these outlying schools now integrated. Most white families, while not eager for busing, have come to recognize the necessity for some integration, with the one caveat that their schools must have a white majority that roughly corresponds to their proportion in the U.S. population. When the federal Department of Education or the courts seek to go further than this "inchoately demanded quota," white families vote with their feet.

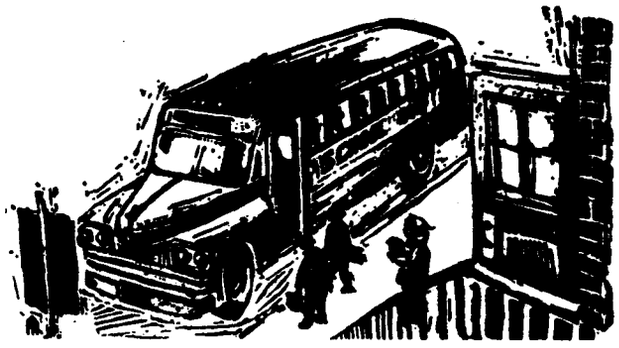
Even more, if the "federal education engineers" continue to be blind enough to insist upon moving white youngsters from educationally average schools to inferior all-black-attended schools, white families, by moving, turn Northern cities into ghettos and public schools into the scholastic equivalent of public housing projects.

While busing of blacks and not whites may seem unjust and, to some, conceivably unconstitutional, it is in fact no such thing. Black children from poor schools (or some small proportion of such children) are being bused to good white schools to improve their educational opportunities. Until black schools and neighborhoods are massively improved — something we must begin now where it is not under way — it is sheer futility to try to force the white children into these black areas, although clearly any white children who want to attend all-black schools have always been welcome.

This is not to say that there should not be all-black schools. On the contrary, there not only can be and will be, but for the calculable future there must be all-black schools — and there must be good ones — for those black families who prefer to live in all-black areas and want to educate their children in all-black schools. The idea of the courts that no schools can be all-black is an overzealous attempt to correct what was, and in many cases is, a brutally unjust educational and social system, by bringing all schools into racial balance without regard to the fact that all-black schools can be as good as all-white schools. To buttress the point, a recent study by Loyola University's Department of Urban Studies conducted in Chicago schools shows that black youngsters in thirty all-black schools in middle-class black areas are presently performing virtually up to the national median in both second and eighth grades, with remarkable improvements noted in the last three to four years. White children could be bused to schools like these thirty (and in a few they are), although neither blacks nor whites appear to desire it strongly.

In sum, the thrust of the big-city programs for improving the education of minority children will have to be three-fold. First, desegregate as many black children into all-white schools as can be done *without causing massive white flight or changes in school performance*, with minimums of fifteen to twenty percent integration in every previously all-white school. Those designing and implementing busing efforts must have the flexibility — and courage — sometimes to pull back, so that a system can desegregate without "getting the bends."

Second, achieving any substantial integration will involve the overturning of the Supreme Court's Detroit decision banning city-suburban integration. Third, justice demands an intensive program now of radical improvements in all-black schools so that black children who want to remain in their own areas can do so, and white youngsters who want to benefit from integrated education can also do so.



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Clearly not all, nor even the majority, of black children can go to integrated schools in cities like Chicago, Milwaukee, Detroit, or New York City in the calculable future. On the other hand, there can be no more all-white schools, except of course in places like Minnesota or North Dakota or very distant suburban areas where there are few, if any, blacks in the area. But when integration takes place, as it must, it should be with a number of black children reasonably calculated not merely to end up creating resegregation.

The dissenting opinions of Powell, Rehnquist, and Stewart (who may soon represent a new majority on busing cases) and the settlement with the Chicago Board of Education may well presage the steps to be taken by the new Secretary of Education, Terrell Bell. That should not be a cause for lamenting. On the contrary the many corrective actions necessary to bring the education of black and other minority children up to par can more easily be taken if they do not overlook essential realities.

Stage

WAR AGAINST THE TATES

'ZOOMAN AND THE SIGN'

A YEAR OR SO ago an incident occurred in Philadelphia, so gratuitously ugly that it caught—at least momentarily—the attention and the sympathy of a city which, like most cities these days, is so full of casual violence that it can hardly focus on a specific crime for longer than the first television bulletin. A little girl, playing on her own front steps, was killed when two teenagers tried to gun down members of a rival gang. Charles Fuller has taken that incident as a starting point for his new play, *Zooman and the Sign*.

In *The Brownsville Raid*, the 1976 play which did most to identify Fuller as a serious new dramatist, he examined one of the nastier episodes in the history of blacks in America. In *Zooman*, he simply uses a real event as a place to begin. At least, I assume (what was I saying about one's attention span for actual violence?) that, aside from setting his play in Philadelphia, he is not concerned with the details of the original occurrence. He has given Ginny Tate her own personality, recreated in what her family say about her, and her own pointless death, which has occurred before the play begins. That death becomes the occasion for a consideration of the killer, the victim's family, the neighborhood, and, by implication, the society as a whole.

Zooman is the killer, a teenage hood with a real name of his own—it is projected on the curtain when he dies—who is played with such electricity by Giancarlo Esposito that he becomes at once attractive and repellent. Except at the end of the play, he appears alone, talking boastingly to the audience, strutting, preening—and justifying, endlessly justifying his every violent act. An old man wearing thick glasses, moving noisily along a subway platform violates Zooman's perverted sense of propriety (he can't hear his radio) and deserves the knife cut he gets. A woman carrying a purse invites robbery and, when she hangs on, screaming, earns the attack on her. Ginny Tate, playing jacks on her own steps, is old enough to know better (too old for that "kid shit" jacks) than to risk her life by imagining that there is a safe place in the jungle. The longer he talks the more we learn about Zooman—the absence of family, the uncertainty of friendship (his buddy tells the police that he fired the gun), the empty triumphs of his marginal life. Another teenager, a friend of Ginny's brother, describes Zooman as a little bit crazy—and so perhaps he is—but he has assessed the world around him, marked off his own emotional territory, and he acts with a kind of hysterical rationality within that area. There were never any stores on the boulevard, he insists of a once flourishing shopping street destroyed in a riot, never rebuilt. For Zooman, there was never the kind of community, the loss of which is one of the main subjects of Fuller's play.

The environmental approach to crime assumes that the criminal is also a victim—the creation of poverty and societal indifference. Too often, on stage, in fiction, in sentimental popular sociology, that platitude is transformed into a vision which understands the criminal so thoroughly that the real victim is forgotten, turned into a detail in a psychological profile. Fuller is concerned with the environment that has produced Zooman, but not at the expense of Ginny Tate and her family. Leaning over the boy's body at the end of the play, Reuben Tate may regret the loss implicit in any wasted life, early death, but the explanation of Zooman never becomes an excuse for his violent behavior.

Fuller has more difficulty with the Tates than with Zooman. They lack his theatrical flamboyance and, despite the details of their lives, have less validity on stage. If I understand the play correctly, however, Fuller is attempting more with them than with the troubled teenager. Although he wishes to convey the personal sense of loss of the family, they also function within the social play as elements of the decaying environment. Rachel and Reuben Tate, brought together by Ginny's death, have been living apart, a fragmented family in a fragmenting society. Rachel, having buried the child and felt the neighborhood's unwillingness to be involved, wants to move away—another separation. The son gets a pistol, an impulse toward vengeance that can be heard in almost every speech of his great-uncle Emmett, who finally kills Zooman although he does not know at whom he is shooting. Emmett and Rachel's older relative—particularly the latter—keep harping back to old patterns of community life, sustaining gestures that surely are not intended as simply beneficial. Although Ash's speeches got applause from the largely black audience with which I saw the play (Frances Foster is an accomplished and very popular actress), Fuller must want us to remember that the world she recalls—before welfare, before riots, before community self-destruction—was one of deprivation and humiliation that generations of blacks struggled to change. Reuben's

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attitude toward Ash's speeches suggests that he, at least, would not want to go back to a time when, as Ash says, blacks were poorer but more helpful to one another. Ash, like too many new conservatives, longs for the old virtues but sees them as necessary products of old indignities.

The neighborhood is certainly not a community in the best sense. The sign of the play's title is one that Reuben hangs on his front porch when none of his neighbors comes forward to identify Ginny's killers. He hopes to shame them into civic responsibility, but instead he arouses their anger. The child-killer is not so dangerous to this street, lined with families looking after themselves first, as the troublemaker who proclaims their shortcomings to the world out there (television cameras come)—the official, the white world which they hope to avoid by shutting up, not noticing, turning away. It looks in the second act as though Fuller is going to make Reuben into Dr. Stockmann, to do his own version of *The Enemy of the People*, but the play only suggests that possibility. Zooman, confused by Reuben's action (niggers don't act like that) comes to face the sign, to tear it down, and meets his death. The play ends without ever carrying Reuben's confrontation with his neighbors to a dramatic or an ideational climax.

Fuller's play is finally disappointing because it does not achieve the form that will let it deal with its own complexities and because the characters never quite escape their representative quality. Yet it is far more interesting than many a neatly made play, ambitious enough to deserve the attention and the respect of theatergoers in search of substance.

GERALD WEALES

Screen

PAR FOR THE CURSE

JUMBLING THE MUMBO

IN ADAPTING Agatha Christie's *The Mirror Crack'd* to the screen, director Guy Hamilton and scriptwriters Jonathan Hales and Barry Sandler apparently think they've made a comedy. But at the pace at which their film moves, I felt more as if I and its cast of aging superstars — Angela Lansbury. Tony Curtis, Kim Novak, Rock Hudson, Elizabeth Taylor — were on our way to a funeral together. *The Mirror Crack'd* is an over-upholstered Rolls Royce of a movie going about ten miles an hour. At that speed, the loudest sound you can hear is certainly not laughter, nor even the ticking of the clock. It's the creaking of the actors' bones.

The action gets under way, about ten minutes after the film begins, when Miss Marple (Lansbury) gets tangled up in a dog's leash, takes a nasty spill, and breaks her ankle. The film ends with Marina Rudd (Taylor) lying down to die in a grand and decorative manner like a diva at the conclusion of some interminable opera. In between these two mishaps there are a great many others, unexplained murders of the sort that usually clutter up an Agatha Christie plot. Unfortunately, the victims of these developments tend to be younger members of the cast — Geraldine Chaplin, for instance — who might have given this film a little life.

In one regard, however, the film is, if not funny, at least realistic. The roles played by its aging stars, Novak and Taylor, are those of . . . aging movie stars. (The mystery involves an American film production that goes on location in an English village.) This may explain why Taylor and Novak thought they could handle their parts in this movie, but what made Lansbury think that she could do anything other than suffer by comparison to Margaret Rutherford's spry, definitive performance as Miss Marple in the Christie adaptations done twenty years ago? The answer to that question remains a mystery.

While I might have liked seeing less of Novak, Hudson, Taylor, et al. in *The Mirror Crack'd*, I was hoping to see more of Peter Ustinov in *Charlie Chan and the Curse of the Dragon Queen*. But in this revival, the old arch detective of the thirties, the great sleuth from the land of ancestor worship and filial piety, is done in by an oedipus complex. Oedipal revenge is the only motive that can account for the upstaging Chan gets in this movie from his "number one" grandson, Lee Chan, Jr. (Richard Hatch). Like the number one son in the original Charlie Chan movies, this grandson is a klutz supposedly in need of instruction from Charlie. But in truth what director Clive Donner and scriptwriters Stan Burns and David Axelrod have made their movie about is the klutziness itself. The Charlie Chan revival is just a background — little more than a pretext, really — for a lot of pointless, unfunny slapstick caused by the inept Lee.

Somehow Lee manages to up-end everybody in his family from his grandmother (Lee Grant) to his hapless fiancée (Michelle Pfeiffer). (Grandma also occasions some of the pratfalls that fall flat in this film. Clumsiness, rather than Charlie's wittiness, was obviously the dominant gene in the union of his family with hers.) When Lee walks down a Chinatown street in San Francisco, where the film is set, he obliviously leaves overturned vegetable stands, collapsed awnings, and shattered plate glass windows in his wake. If he rushes to the scene of a murder on a pier, all the reporters and TV cameramen end up in the bay as a result of his arrival. If he chases the Dragon Lady (Angie Dickinson), he leads the city's police chief (Brian Keith) into collisions with half the patrol cars on his force. A movie which let Peter Ustinov take a crack at the droll, talky, low-budget tradition of the Chan series from the thirties would have been worth seeing. But Donner works instead in the contemporary tradition of the over-produced dud like *1941* or *The Blues Brothers*.

In Donner's film Charlie's relationship with the Dragon Lady is established through a black and white flashback to the 1930s, a campy scene in which Charlie reveals her as a murderess and she swears revenge on him and all his heirs. John Byrum's *Sphinx* also begins with an ancient curse, a flashback to ancient Egypt in which a tombolari who is about to be

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quartered by four wild horses curses the architect of the pyramids. *Sphinx* follows this up with several other flashbacks to both the life of this architect and the unsealing of King Tut's tomb in the 1920s by archaeologist Howard Carter, and in so doing the movie indulges in some tomb-robbing of its own, from *The Exorcist*.

The purpose of these detours into the past is to lend the allure of the occult to an ancient effigy and a papyrus inscription discovered by present-day archaelogist Erica Baron (Leslie Anne Downs). In attempting to escape a ring of antiquities smugglers who are also after these artifacts, Erica gets involved with a state security officer named Hassam (Frank Langella). Since this film is intended as a real thriller rather than a spoof like *The Mirror Crack'd* and *Charlie Chan*, it only needs to tend to its plot to provide at least the sort of light entertainment Agatha Christie does when read straight. But no, as both director and scriptwriter Byrum, tempted no doubt by the vulgarities of the Robin Cook novel on which his film is based, becomes preoccupied with the romance between Erica and Hassam.

The emotion is always the most transparently hokey part of this kind of potboiler anyway, and here it has the added disadvantage of causing the filmmaker to lose track of the action and intrigue. The consequence is that all the mumbo jumbo about ancient Egypt is buried beneath the mumble-jumble of a story in which we can't understand half the time what people are talking about or why they do what they do. At the end Erica is seen running from the gateway that marks the entrance to the Valley of the Kings. Fast as she flees, though, she beat me only by a step as I headed for the doors of the theater.

COLIN L. WESTERBECK, JR.

Books: DEEP IN THE HEART OF TAXES

REVOLT OF THE HAVES

Robert Kuttner

Simon and Schuster, $13.95, 384 pp.

Jack Clark

IN the opening chapters of *Revolt of the Haves*, one occasionally needs reminding that this compelling and well-written history of the California tax revolt represents fact not fiction. The reminders come quickly; no novel could hold up under the strain of incredible characters like Jerry Brown and Howard Jarvis and the strained plot leading to passage of Proposition 13.

Ironies, sometimes amusing, more often bitter, abound. In 1965, the San Francisco newspapers exposed the questionable assessment practices of Russell Wolden, the "crooked assessor," who rebated business property taxes for a consulting fee. Wolden was tried and convicted, despite a large defense fund raised by municipal business leaders and testimony on his behalf by the most respectable property-holders in the city. A wave of reform swept through the state, and the practices of other crooked assessors were halted. The result: the low property taxes paid by homeowners soared and business property taxes declined to levels far below Wolden's corrupt deals as uniform property assessments became the rule of law.

Through the late 1960s and 1970s, with much fanfare by local officials, tax rates in many communities actually declined. Of course, because the value of the property was appreciating tax receipts were climbing astronomically. The rate at which people were being taxed may well have dropped ten percent; but if the assessed value of the property rose twenty-five percent, the local government was collecting more and hustling voters with talk of a tax cut. While resentments about escalating property taxes were boiling over, the state treasury held a bountiful surplus which Governor Jerry Brown used to promote his image as a fiscal conservative and hoped to use for a Golden State space program. Opposed by business and sponsored by landlords, Proposition 13 ended up rewarding business with about two-thirds of the property tax savings and landlords with a subsequently successful rent-control drive.

The details of what happened in California are crucial, and Kuttner masterfully lays them out. But the significance of the tax revolt and the spread of anti-government right-wing populism extends far beyond California's politics. Particularly now, with the Republican landslide and the endless punditry about the nation's turn to the right, understanding what went into and what came out of the tax revolt is essential.

Diverging from those who see the tax revolt as the majoritarian wave of right-wing populism, Kuttner concludes that voting tax revolters have cast ballots primarily against high taxes, secondarily against politicians and only against government a distant third. To be sure the atmosphere around the tax revolt has supplied a hothouse culture for the growth of right-wing populism and just plain right-wing crankiness. Kuttner examines initiatives imitating Jarvis in Oregon, Michigan, Washington State and elsewhere, always with an eye on the fringe right (after 1978 with corporate blessings) promoting the efforts. And he looks at the National Tax Payers Union and National Tax Limitation Committee, rival organizations of reactionaries boosted by Proposition 13. Unlike these ideological groups, most voters who supported tax limitation were not committed to dismantling social programs. Many in fact formed the core of support for traditional New Deal liberalism.

Yet it cannot really be doubted that the tax revolt has had conservative, anti-government consequences. California

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was the starting point, and it is there that the list of victims is clearest: welfare recipients; the mentally ill and developmentally disabled; students, teachers and public employees in general; members of minority groups who depended heavily on human services that were cut and who were beginning the climb through public employment.

Liberalism found itself defenseless in Proposition 13's wake because the tax revolt hit where it hurt hardest: in the purse strings. Since the New Deal, the liberal response to almost any problem has been to spend more. As Kuttner forcefully argues, that does not mean that money has been lavished on the poor. Some of it has been absorbed in various layers of government bureaucracy required by our federalist structure (for a number of programs we have federal, state and local civil servants). More insidious has been the pork barrel structure of our welfare state subsidies. For every cent expended to benefit the poor, more money must be spent to buy in various interest groups. Kuttner recounts his experience as chief investigator of the State Banking Committee, and he focuses his analysis on housing and health care subsidies. In both cases he argues convincingly that the monies spent enriched private and affluent providers (real estate hustlers, insurance companies, doctors) while providing minimal services and sometimes even disrupting the lives of the poor.

Yet the mainstream liberal response to the shortcomings of such programs remained a desire to increase their budgets. Proposition 13 threw the liberals into self-doubt and persuaded legions of conservative ideologues and corporate lobbyists that public opinion and even history were on their side. The politics of tax-cutting spawned other state and local initiatives and the national debate around capital formation and supply-side economics. The bright glimmers of tax reform seen in the late sixties faded as the corporations won the upper hand in Congress.

Of course, there were other trends as well. Kuttner cites the work of Massachusetts Fair Share and the Ohio Public Interest Campaign in turning the tax issue

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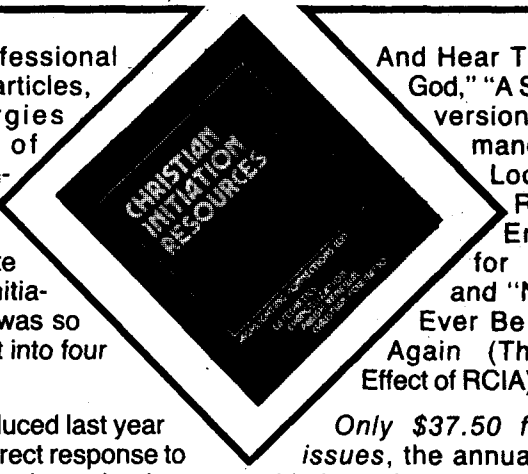

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around as an organizing tool for the populist left. Even more pervasive, Kuttner sees the tax-cut momentum redefining American liberalism. With the easy answer of "spend more" cut out as an option, he sees the possibility of liberal policy turning toward less expensive, more effective structural reforms. Getting back to the housing analysis, one example he cites is the anti-redlining legislation passed by many states. No great bureaucracy was created, but banks were required to disclose where their monies were going and to reinvest in the neighborhoods their savings came from. Heralding other examples such as the Coop Bank, encouragement of Health Maintenance organizations and a program called Neighborhood Housing Services, Kuttner calls for a "leaner populism."

That all makes eminent sense, and yet something remains unsatisfying in Kuttner's conclusion. He carefully dissects the tax revolt and concludes that the rich are reaping the greater part of the savings. He meticulously analyzes the welfare state, American-style, and concludes, correctly in my view, that its purposes are structurally undermined by subservience to the corporate rich.

Certainly spending more money per se fails to address, much less solve, the problems of maldistribution and corporate domination. Spending less, however, provides only leaner guarantees. Kuttner argues for structural reforms. In one of the areas he covers in detail, housing, there is a possibility that the government can provide incentives and disincentives to a market which really functions. In health care, the other policy area he probes, we must really at some point join the rest of the industrialized world in enacting a comprehensive national health care system. Even with strict cost controls, that will cost public money. It may cost us a smaller percentage of GNP than we currently spend on health care, but the financing will shift from private to public spheres. Similarly in energy, in transportation, in job creation and in that great catch-all category, reindustrialization, demands from all sides call for more government involvement and spending, not less.

Questions remain about what role the government will play, in whose interest it will act and who will control its actions. The answers to those questions will affect the possibilities for a more decentralized and democratic society envisioned by Kuttner. Liberals must turn toward structural reforms and a leaner populism, by all means. But we also require a recognition that the class struggle politics we see unfolding deal not only with retrenchment and anti-statism but with expenditures of hundreds of millions.

In a remarkable interview shortly after his conversion to Proposition 13, Brown insisted that he was not categorically anti-government. "There are some areas that should be increased," he said, "like space," and he went on to speak rapturously of space exploration as the last frontier. "We have to decide whether we're a great nation or just a bigger version of Uruguay," he declared.

And what of those directly hurt by the Proposition 13 cuts, whose welfare checks were not keeping pace with inflation, whose children could not go to summer school, what would they say to this set of priorities?

"What would they have said to Queen Isabella?" Brown replied, deadpan. —Robert Kuttner

Revolt of the Haves

Spiritual direction: a good beginning

SOUL FRIEND

Kenneth Leech

Harper and Row $8.95, 250 pp.

Morton Kelsey

MANY of those who listen to contemporary Christians attest to the fact that there is no greater need in the church today than the development of competent spiritual directors. Kenneth Leech addresses this concern with skill and learning in *Soul Friend*. He presents a very convincing case for the centrality of spiritual direction in Christian ministry. First of all he sketches the present day spiritual climate and the need and desire of many young and old for direction on the spiritual journey. The author then traces the history of spiritual direction within the Christian tradition, and he does so with skill and erudition. *Soul Friend* is worth owning for these two chapters alone. The author deserves the gratitude of those interested in spiritual formation for this excellent introduction to the subject.

Even in these fine chapters there are some important omissions. The best book on the spiritual significance of the drug culture, Andrew Weil's *The Natural Mind*, is not mentioned. Little emphasis is given to the importance of Dante, and Charles Williams's studies of Dante are not mentioned. Likewise Baron von Hügel is important as a spiritual director in his *Letters to a Niece*, and the history of modern spirituality is incomplete without reference to *The Mystical Element in Religion*.

The basic thrust of *Soul Friend* is towards leading church people further upon the spiritual journey, and so there is no attempt to deal with the intelligent agnostic who has been imprisoned by the materialism of our age and is seeking something more. There is no attempt to provide a world view to help these people who stand at the periphery of our churches today and need direction and help. He rightly criticizes Bishop Robinson's attitude towards prayer and spiritual direction, but he offers no alternative to Robinson's attempt to make Christianity relevant to the person with a rationalistic and materialistic bias.

One long chapter is devoted to describing the difference between spiritual direction, counseling, and therapy. Leech recognizes that these fields overlap, but fails to show how closely related they are. He presents a superficial understanding of Jung, who once told me that his

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psychotherapeutic method was closer to the classical spiritual direction in 19th century France than to any other school of psychotherapy. It is difficult for me to understand how the spiritual director can listen to the depth of the human soul without understanding something of the symbolism of dreams. Whatever else the dream provides, it reveals the unfaced depths of ourselves. The author makes no reference to this whole subject or its place in spiritual direction. As I have shown in *God, Dreams and Revolution*, most of the church fathers used dreams in their spiritual direction.

There is an excellent discussion of the relationship of sexuality and spirituality. However, nothing is said about how the spiritual director trains him/herself to understand and deal with the subject of sexual pathology which touches nearly every human being. No mention is made of the very difficult problem of transference in close relationships. The recent development of the hearing ministry within the church is examined, but none of the in-depth and historical studies of the subject are mentioned. The author makes extended reference to Frank Lake's *Clinical Theology* which is, unfortunately, little known in this country. He also examines the pastoral counseling movement in the United States and shows how it fails to offer spiritual direction. He does not make the suggestion which seems obvious that adequate spiritual direction needs both the skills of traditional spiritual direction *and* the skills of pastoral counseling.

The most serious deficiency of this study of spiritual direction is its onesided view of spirituality. Leech provides an excellent summary of the apophatic, imageless way of mysticism, the way which stresses the negative way towards God, the dark night of the soul and the darkness in which God is found. He makes no mention of the other and probably more widespread mystical tradition within Christianity which finds God through the vision, the image, and the dream. This is the tradition of much of Eastern Orthodoxy, medieval monasticism, classical Ignatian spirituality. Jung rediscovered it in his practice of active imagination. The author does not seem to be aware of the dangers of the imageless way of spirituality which was questioned by the Seventh Ecumenical Council (the last in which the whole church participated). This council concluded that those who deny the value of the image also deny the value and reality of the incarnation. He seems to be unaware of the dangers of getting lost in the darkness and depth of the unconscious which is common among practitioners of Zen in Japan. There is little or no mention of the whole problem of evil within the spiritual journey. If spiritual directors are to help men and women upon the spiritual journey, they need to know these dangers. They also need to be well-versed in the subject of psychic phenomena and the meaning of symbols. St. Teresa of Avila continually complained that her directors had little knowledge of these things and that the actual darkness of union was a

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The area of sexuality is crucial to the entire discussion. The spiritual director is concerned with union with God, and this process of union demands a profound degree of self-knowledge and maturity. Because man is a sexual being, it involves the acceptance of one's sexuality, and the integration of sexuality with the rest of life. This integration is one of the central purposes of religion. Hence the insistence in the spiritual tradition that the guide should be a man experienced in the passions.

—Kenneth Leech
Soul Friend

very small part of the mystical life.

Soul Friend betrays a lack of depth in many areas. The author has ventured to deal with many topics of which he did not have sufficient in-depth knowledge. At times he launches into sermonizing and rhetoric instead of offering concrete suggestions and detailed sets of directions. The task of spiritual direction at the present time is a very complex one involving knowledge of many aspects of Christian tradition, an inside knowledge of depth psychology and personal experience in prayer, contemplation, and meditation under the direction of some other person. The author fails to present this complexity adequately.

In spite of all this, I have seen no better book on the need for spiritual directors and no finer, more adequate history of the subject. This book is a good beginning, but not the final word on the subject.

Differing styles ironically jostling

THE STATE OF IRELAND

Benedict Kiely

David R. Godine, $14.95, 389 pp.

THE PUSHCART PRIZE, V
BEST OF THE SMALL PRESSES

Edited by Bill Henderson

The Pushcart Press, $17.95, 608 pp.

Robert L. King

THE TITLE of the novella which concludes Benedict Kiely's collection of short stories comes out of the musings of its central character, a retired teacher forced by IRA Provisionals to be an agent of their terror: "Not even the Mafia thought of the proxy bomb, operation proxy, proxopera for gallant Irish patriots fighting imaginary empires by murdering the neighbours. . . . Proxopera, he says, and likes the sound of the word." The unwilling Granda Binchey, whose memories of his dead wife are interwoven with lines from Catullus, would use language for stability—to exert a measure of control over a world that could quite literally blow up around him no matter what he chooses to do. So long as he can coin a word, he is more than a delivery man for death, but soon his ordeal will reduce him to quoting a soldier's obscenity as later he will parrot the words of his housekeeper. If style and self are one, then Binchey's is a loss of the spirit, like Ireland's, a state where Kiely sees the once distinctive idiom shrinking to the boundaries of a common expletive.

Kiely's stories almost casually allude to centuries of literature and song; some of his characters prize Tarzan and reject Yeats, but they all breathe the same thick air. Because Kiely's art springs from a culture and not a geography, he builds stories poetically; the density of a scene matters more than the movement of narrative. He goes above character to give us its embodiment, the singular voice.

This collection is alive with differing, yet compatible styles that ironically jostle against one another. In "Maiden's Leap," for one example out of eighteen, a pompous writer learns that he is less creative than his cousin/housekeeper when the death of her lover brings her diary to light; arrogant and patronizing, his criticism of her writing uses formal diction that complements his sterile life:

> He read: . . . He doesn't see the life that's going on under his nose. He says there are no brothels in Dublin. But if Dublin had the best brothels in the long history of sin . . .
>
> Do you know, now, that was not badly put. She has a certain felicity of phrase. But then she has some Macmahon blood in her, and the educational advantages that over the years this house has afforded her.
>
> . . . long history of sin, he'd be afraid of his breeches to enter any of them.

After dramatizing this exchange, the narrator informs it with a nicely ironic allusion:

> With deliberate speed, majestic instancy, he walked from the dining-room to her bedroom, tossed the book onto her bed where she would see it on her return and know he had read it, and that her nastiness was uncovered.

That bed, the reader knows, had held her lover's corpse a few hours earlier, and Thompson's Hound was after bigger game.

In some stories, the narrator appears as "I" for a moment or two; sometimes he speaks to us directly, but he never moralizes. Whether he is Kiely himself or a Celtic Everyman, the "I" remains beautifully undefined, no doubt because he has nothing to prove to or about himself. His sure self-awareness allows him to look outward, to see the world whole—bishops, reporters, whores, professors—and to honor its layers of wit and folly and joy and loss.

None of the seventeen stories in *Pushcart Prize, V* can measure up to Kiely, and a few of them are quite good. Unwilling or unable, however, to assume the liberating burden of a rich cultural heritage, too many *Pushcart* authors fall back on a detached understated style or on easy juxtapositions of opposites. These strategies may pass for honesty or objectivity once in a while, but over the long haul (as in much of "On the Big Wind," "Showdown," "One Spring," and others), they are numbing. Unless it is a conscious pose, ironic understatement too easily becomes a refuge for the moral bankrupt; stepping back leads to

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walking away. Cultural signs like the ones satirized in *Lolita* are often enshrined in *Pushcart* fiction; values derive from references to Budweiser, Chrysler, Kenny Rogers, CB, and TV. Fair enough perhaps in a society that remembers its hostages in Iran by tying plastic ribbons on telephone poles, but hardly the stuff of expansive literature.

Cynthia Ozick in "Levitation" goes far beyond her mannered opening with a concluding section that recalls the end of "Flowering Judas"; Elizabeth Spencer's "The Girl Who Loved Horses" is well paced and complex beneath an obvious surface, and Asa Baber's "Tranquillity Base" earns its final horror. Bo Ball's imagery and understatement play off against normal human expectations; his "Wish Book" is *The Grapes of Wrath* in small. One of the solid critical essays in this *Pushcart* volume ("Wrapped Minds" by David Perkins) comments on much of the other fiction and on the poetry too: "Since it is relation-less, it cannot be found inadequate. Since it holds out no promise, most of the thirty-three poems here qualify as verse. In contrast, Robert Penn Warren writes about seeing, saying, knowing, time and being, all in twenty-eight measured, subtle, unaffected lines. We learn from him still.

Other lessons of permanent worth come from David Bosworth's essay, "The Literature of Awe," proof that a categorical approach to literature can illuminate and challenge, especially the reputations of Beckett and Vonnegut as practitioners of the literature of despair. William Harmon's "Eiron *Eyes*" is an enthusiastic, witty appraisal of Louis Zukofsky; David Plante's achievement in "Jean Rhys: A Remembrance" relies for its understated force on the reality of her slightly senile, slightly deranged, highly intelligent point of view. Jan Carew's essay on the Caribbean writer takes its fire from his personal involvement; Lewis Hyde is fascinating on gift exchange. In general, *Pushcart* criticism may succeed where its fictions fall short because non-fiction can report its subject and assume its values without making the sympathetic leap that creative art requires.

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Despite its shortcomings (which are, after all, our own) *The Pushcart Prize* is well worth having as more than just a record of what our small presses are doing. *The State of Ireland*, though, is a book to reread and cherish; it should mark Kiely's well-deserved entry to the college readers that include selections from *Dubliners*. He should give us a fine story on that theme.

To be Polish & to be free

A QUESTION OF REALITY

Kazimierz Brandys
Translated by Isabel Barzun
Charles Scribner's, $8.95, 180 pp.

Ivan Sanders

THE WORD Polish, as a qualitative adjective, probably figures more importantly in the literature of that West-Slavic nation than similar ethnic labels do in other national literatures. An outsider may be put off by the vagueness, the parochialism of these terms; he may wonder, for instance, about the mysterious qualities that make a work written in Warsaw or Cracow "typically Polish" or "intensely Polish." Yet, the obsession with national identity does make more sense if one knows something about the checkered history of the country, or even the general region, in question. In his new "novel of Poland," which, incidentally, could not be published there, Kazimierz Brandys becomes acutely aware of this supercharged national consciousness; indeed he apologizes for it. His hero, a Polish intellectual responding to a neatly professional, earnest, and under the circumstances, woefully inadequate questionnaire prepared by a Polish-born American sociologist, admits ruefully toward the end of his meandering comments that he has been dealing with "local problems, Polish problems." But he also points out that he lives in a country "which for two hundred years has been compelled to adopt the reflex of self-defense, in a country which has only survived by means of prayers, of secret universities, and of banned books; a country which, at a time when Western societies were achieving unity, had only one goal, to survive."

If Brandys's book were only an eloquent albeit constricted apologia for a Polish thinker's excessive preoccupation with Polishness, it would be of limited interest to non-Polish readers. As it is, the novel is not likely to appeal to those who still believe that an intellectual must always rise above local prides and prejudices, who consider "the question of reality" to be, of necessity, a larger, more universal question. But fortunately the author has much to say about the drawbacks of a fixedly national point of view, thereby illuminating the dilemma of an independent-minded intellectual who is thwarted in his efforts to remain his own man not only by an authoritarian state, but by his own deepest impulses as well by a collective unconscious that colors his every response to the world. Brandys's hero remarks at one point that many of his compatriots behave "as if the individual in Poland had no psychology of his own, as if there were only a national psychology." He tries hard to understand his own father's myopic patriotism. A respectable professor who handed down to his son the nineteenth century, he could be touched only by Polish misfortune, Polish suffering. As a young man the narrator was perplexed and affronted by his father's narrowmindedness, but now he muses, only half-facetiously, "perhaps he thought that God and Man were Polish, after all. Perhaps he thought that everything divine and humane is thriving and healthy on Polish soil, while beyond stretches the unhealthy land of psychological and philosophical considerations." The narrator knows only too well how useful, how comforting, how indispensable this overriding ethnic sensibility has always been to his people. He reminds us, for example, that the present "internationalist" Communist leadership is just as fond of romantic idealizations of the Polish past as were the discredited, chauvinist regimes of the pre-war era. But he knows, too, that there is a price to pay for illusions of national greatness — and the price is individual freedom. Nationalism impedes freedom, it fosters conformity. To be Polish, and to be free, is the greatest challenge faced by Brandys's hero.

During the war political commitment came easy. "I really joined the Resistance so as to fight against the Devil," he says; and then quickly adds: "But that kind of explanation was not readily accepted, after the war." Despite his less than impeccable background, the narrator becomes a well-known stage director, a university professor, and for a time, a member of the new cultural establishment. In his responses to the survey he alludes to the subtle and not so subtle ways in which he compromised his principles during his rise to fame. (It's worth noting that in the early fifties Kazimierz Brandys himself published a number of novels which contain every clichéd requisite of socialist realism; the works he wrote after the Thaw, on the other hand [e.g., *The Defense of Granada, The Mother of Kings*], are painful reappraisals of the Stalinist years. In 1966 Brandys resigned from the Communist party, which he joined twenty years earlier.) By the 1970s Brandys's hero is a disenchanted, though not quite desperate, man. Marxism has lost its appeal for him, but nothing has taken its place. The whole matter of political *engagement* has become much more complex. He is fully aware now that there are ills which have nothing to do with, cannot be explained

There persists an article of faith that supposes that we have somehow lost a paradise, that Homer or Dante or Milton could write tremendous poems because the poet and his audience in illo tempore, *in that spell of magic and an organic oral tradition, shared a whole complex of beliefs capable of organizing and running an epic poem. That's a crock. If Homer, Dante, and Milton have anything in common, it is that they seem, fitfully, to have entertained beliefs that nobody could share.*

—William Harmon
Pushcart Prize, V.

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away with, politics. He finds it oddly revealing that "the perpetuation of Marx's social ideas is now the work of the developed capitalist countries, while we, instead of building our socialist superstructures as Marxists, are the ones who yearn for metaphysics." Ultimately, the narrator breaks with the establishment, gives up his position and privileges, and opts for the life of a dissident, an outcast. He does this not because he has found something better to believe in, not even because he is convinced that the system he lives under is that corrupt. He simply values intellectual freedom. "A man under a cloud begins to see more clearly," he says.

A Question of Reality is not an easy, nor always satisfying, book. Though its hero makes repeated references to his relationship with friends and family members, there is no plot to speak of; the work is not so much a novel as a long essay, a monologue. The critic John Aldridge has written that the great strength of the modern European novel is that "in it ideas are as important as physical sensations and may even be experienced with all the force and acuteness of physical sensations." In this sense *A Question of Reality* is an engaging example of a novel of ideas. What it lacks is sustained narrative interest, and that, it seems, is somethings not even the most sophisticated practitioners of the form can do completely without.

Social change 'framed'

THE WHOLE WORLD IS WATCHING
MASS MEDIA IN THE MAKING AND UNMAKING OF THE NEW LEFT

Todd Gitlin
University of California, $12.95, 327 pp.

Don Lazere

THIS book gains strength from Gitlin's dual perspectives as a New Left activist (he was, in 1963-64, the third president of Students for a Democratic Society, the main movement organization studied here) and as a politically committed scholar (he now teaches sociology of literature and communications at Berkeley). While many leading figures of the New Left have wandered into dubious ideological paths, Gitlin has continued to command widespread respect within and outside the left for both political and intellectual integrity—qualities whose manifestation in the present book remove from it any taint of being a tract or apologia.

The first of three main parts, "Images of a Movement," focuses on national media coverage of SDS throughout the year 1965 when it first came under the media spotlight. The study is grounded on his interviews and research in the archives at CBS-TV and the *New York Times*—selected because they were widely considered most sympathetic to the radical movement.

In rebuttal to the neoconservative view of the media elite as part of a left-leaning "new class," Gitlin argues (as do other recent critics like Herbert Gans and Gaye Tuchman) that most major media executives and top editorial personnel are allies by class identity and ideology of the industrial, political, and military power elite, devoted to maintenance of a capitalistic corporate state, albeit liberally administered. Their ideology, explicit or tacit, combined with the profit-maximizing interests and daily institutional routines of media corporations, imposed certain distorting "frames" on coverage of radical opposition in the sixties even when newspeople believed they were being fair.

Movement demonstrations, for example, were regarded ipso facto as an undesirable disruption of the normal, valid social order and consequently were covered in the same tone as crime reportage. The media denigrated the more temperate radical elements, such as the SDS "old guard" of which Gitlin was a member, and ignored their substantive concerns while luridly exaggerating violent protest—real or anticipated—and focusing on extremist factions even at the time of the mid-sixties when they were still marginal.

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Throughout Part I Gitlin brings a literary critic's astuteness to bear on explicating fine shades of tone and semantic slanting in media reportage. He cites a Dan Rather newscast on CBS in 1976 revealing that the FBI's burglaries and wire taps began in the thirties and continued through World War II and the cold war, reaching a peak "'during the civil disturbances of the sixties.'' Gitlin notes: "The black and student opposition movements of the sixties, which would look different if they were called, say, 'movements for peace and justice,' were reduced to nasty little things."

In Part II, "Media in the Making and Unmaking of the Movement," Gitlin examines the effect of media coverage on SDS, drawing from his own files, inside views on and interviews with a variety of movement figures.

In its origins SDS was steadfastly dedicated to non-violent protest and "participatory democracy," construed as meaning (1) decentralized, widespread national organization intended to minimize the authority of individual leaders, and (2) long-term activism on a number of fronts, including civil rights, community organizing, the campus movement, and opposition to U.S. support of foreign dictatorship. This program, however, ran diametrically against the simplistic frames of the media, which were set for charismatic leader-celebrities and visual, dramatic actions on current "hot" issues that would fit neatly into the limited space of page one or the six o'clock news.

Inevitably, the media's distorted emphasis on movement violence and "stars" became self-fulfilling prophecies: more theatrical and violence-prone figures were attracted to the movement and SDS; media-created "leaders" like Jerry Rubin and Abbie Hoffman represented no real organization or constituency at all. Thus Gitlin attributes to the liberal media a large part of the blame for the degeneration, splintering, and eventual disintegration of SDS and the whole New Left—although he is equally critical of the movement's own internal confusions and susceptibility to performing for the media. Moreover, the media's selective emphasis on the crazies helped turn the public against the movement and provided a pretext for official attempts to suppress *all* opposition.

In a brilliant chapter near the end of Part II, titled "Contracting Time and Eclipsing Context," and in Part III, "Hegemony, Crisis, and Opposition," Gitlin shifts into a more theoretical mode influenced by Marxist cultural critics including the Frankfurt School (oddly unacknowledged here), Antonio Gramsci, Raymond Williams, and Stuart Hall. He postulates that in contemporary capitalist society not only the content but the temporal-spatial structuring capacities of mass media have evolved into modes of social control. The media may seem, as politicians like Spiro Agnew and scholars like Daniel Bell and Daniel Boorstin have claimed, to undermine social stability by their constant quest for novelty and sensation as well as their jumbling of images and realities, the authentic and the factitious. But the main effect in the 60's, Gitlin persuasively argues, was to subvert opposition movements by pul-

REVIEWERS

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MICHAEL CONNOR *is an Albany reporter and political writer.*

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ling them fatally into the media's time and space warps, fostering illusions of the efficacy of play-acting at instant revolution and guerrilla warfare taken out of its Third-World context.

At the same time, paradoxically, "the stability of the system is predicated on the institutionalization of change and speed," for the introduction of novelty is controlled by the establishment and contained within its structural and ideological frames. These frames, which include the regular time structures and stereotypy of TV programing, in turn condition the mass public to a normalized, routinized, domesticated order of experience that makes the majority fearful of any fundamental challenge to the social order.

The ultimate, crucial question his analysis tacitly poses is whether *any* movement for social change regardless of its merits, being perforce dependent on publicity in today's mass-mediated society, can get its message across through the distorting lenses and ideological filters of the media:

> People as producers of meaning have no voice in what the media make of what they say or do, or in the context within which the media frame their activity. The resulting meanings, now mediated, acquire an eerie substance in the real world, standing outside their ostensible makers and confronting them as an alien force. The social meanings of intentional action have been deformed beyond recognition.

The critical reception of Gitlin's book in the mass press he criticizes has provided yet another depressing instance of media framing. Unable to effectively fault his facts or analysis, journalistic reviewers have reverted to stereotypes of academic jargon to denigrate his work on stylistic grounds. He has indeed synthesized a vast array of academic sources, mainstream and Marxist, but surely one of his most admirable achievements is having translated all this sociologese into a lucid style and eloquent personal voice. The carping of defensive critics will not prevent this book from solidifying Gitlin's preeminence among younger American cultural analysts.

In Brief

WORSHIP AND WORK, *by Colman Barry, O.S.B. Liturgical Press, $12.50, 526 pp.*

The way a small primitive German Benedictine missionary settlement in the wilds of Minnesota in 1856 grew to become a large, influential monastery with offshoots in several foreign lands and eminent St. John's University makes an absorbing story. For me, the key event in Colman Barry's highly readable and documented account of the community's first hundred years is St. John's part in the founding of the liturgical movement in the United States.

This was sparked by Virgil Michel, whose response to what he encountered in the great Benedictine abbeys of Belgium, France, Austria, and Germany was the conviction that indeed the liturgy is "the primary and indispensable source of the true Christian spirit."

His efforts, in concert with those of his colleagues, led to Vatican II, Mass in the vernacular, and the active participation of the people of God in the prayer life of the Catholic church. In the later years of his short life Virgil Michel also became justly known for his emphasis on Christian social action, on the inescapable social implications of the Mass and liturgy.

The 1980 edition of *Worship and Work* concludes with a comparably informative Epilogue in which Colman Barry shows how in recent years St. John's has been responding to "the signs of the times." This was a period of such achievements as great expansion of the university, pioneering in ecumenism, and the establishing of the world-acclaimed international film library of precious manuscripts from all over the world—a present-day form of the scholarly labors of the monks back in the Dark Ages.

But, confronted with the wasteland of a morale-shattered world, and somewhat reduced in numbers, the abbey of St. John's is intent on spiritual renewal. The author says that "the main thrust of the

Gene Sharp

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community was inward." The volume as a whole touches on a wide range of achievements in the field of action as well as the quality of the monks' interior life.

EDWARD S. SKILLIN

THE QUESTION OF SEPARATISM: QUEBEC AND THE STRUGGLE OVER SOVEREIGNTY, *by Jane Jacobs, Random House, $8.95, 144 pp.*

Canada at present is in the throes of a debate over its constitutional future that will certainly not be settled as quickly as the country's impatient Prime Minister, Pierre Trudeau, would like. The immediate aim of Trudeau's government is the patriation of that curious document known as the British North America Act, an 1867 statute of the imperial government which now can be changed only by the British parliament in Westminster, acting at the request of the Ottawa cabinet. Once the power to amend the Act (a *de facto* constitution) is returned to Canada, a long period of discussion and probably disagreement will certainly follow; it may end with Canada as we know it no longer existing, since the discontent with the federal system that long motivated political life in the French-speaking province of Québec has spread recently to other provinces, particularly those most distant from Ottawa—British Columbia and Alberta in the west and Newfoundland (which only entered the Canadian confederation in 1949) in the east.

In *The Question of Separatism*, Jane Jacobs—an immigrant Canadian and an internationally respected authority on the problems of urbanism—has turned her acute perceptions to one aspect of the present Canadian crisis, which is the possibility—and the desirability—of Québec's becoming a viable independent state.

Her view is sympathetic. She sees the aspirations of Québec fitting in with her current world trend towards seeing human collectivities in terms of diversity rather than uniformity. She argues that countries small in terms of population can—as the examples of Switzerland and Belgium show—develop prosperous economies and high living standards, provided they are willing to use inventiveness as a major resource. She uses the historic example of Norway's secession from Sweden in 1905 to show how a province can split away peacefully and become independent, provided there is good will and wisdom on both sides. And she examines with a great deal of shrewdness the various plans put forward by the advocates of Québecois self-determination, and particularly René Lévesque's proposals for Sovereignty-Association which continue to haunt the Canadian political scene in spite of the fact that they were narrowly defeated in a 1979 provincial referendum.

In discussing Québec's claims, which she favors, Jane Jacobs is temperate and fair; she points out the defects in Lévesque's proposals at the same time as she recognizes that to allow Québec sovereignty within a pattern of economic association might well be an advantage to the rest of Canada rather than the reverse.

But there are aspects of the situation as it has developed in the last year which Dr. Jacobs ignores, though they are bound to affect the situation in both Québec and the other Canadian provinces. One is the fact that Québec has bred not only the most dedicated separatists in Canada, but also the most rigid centralists, the group of key members of the present Liberal cabinet who accept the Jacobinical authoritarianism of Pierre Trudeau; their attitudes would be more appropriate to Metropolitan France than to French Québec. Trudeau's attitudes in turn have bred resentment in Western and Atlantic Canada, many of whose people believe the attention perpetually focused on the Québec problem is harming their local interests. The inflexibility of Trudeau in his demands for high centralization, and the growing opposition of the outer provinces (more secure economically because of recent oil finds), are creating a situation where the next decade may see Québec as only one among the provinces bent on loosening the Canadian confederation into an association of sovereign states, a modernized Switzerland. If that happens it will be an experiment heavy with interest for a world that has grown tired of nineteenth-century ideas of nationality.

GEORGE WOODCOCK

COUNSEL FOR THE DEFENSE. THE AUTOBIOGRAPHY OF PAUL O'DWYER, *by Paul O'Dwyer, Simon and Schuster, $10.95, 281 pp.*

There's a lovely consistency to this tale of a New Yorker famed for his political stamina. Born in Bohola, County Mayo, amid Irish rebellion and anti-clericalism, Paul O'Dwyer naturally identified with the downtrodden. Oddly, the inevitable episodes leading from this sympathy—the aiding of Jewish gunrunners and the fighting for civil rights workers—make the least interesting portion of this worthwhile book.

"My birth in 1907 was not regarded as a blessing in my family," is how O'Dwyer begins the most vivid section. He was the last of eleven born to two poor teachers, Patrick and Bridget McNicholas O'Dwyer. He fondly recalls they expected him to uphold the family's high standing in the schoolroom and to send hunger from the door by harvesting potatoes and turning turf. He watched his family and friends wrestle with lordly Englishmen and a scheming canon until he emigrated to New York City as a teenager. With charm, the concern of a motherly landlady, and some political help from Bill, his much-older brother and the city's future mayor, he worked as a warehouseman, doorman and sailor while earning a law degree at St. John's University.

When O'Dwyer tells his public life, the pace strangely slows. Each story of O'Dwyer defending the Harrisburg Sev-

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en, maneuvering on behalf of John Kennedy among fellow reform Democrats, or working the street for himself in Senate and New York City Council elections is concise and proof of the story-teller's gift for knowing a good quotation. Yet, the endearing detail and the lilt are missing.

Still, "Counsel For the Defense" reminds me that at my family's old home in Brooklyn's Park Slope (which O'Dwyer left for its parochialism), O'Dwyer was something of a myth. We seldom thought of him for his prominence; we remembered him for his snow-hair, humanity and earnestness. We still can.

MICHAEL CONNOR

Correspondence

(Continued from page 161)

But this is to make the mortal error of accepting the assumptions of the debate. These are, first, that nuclear weapons make some kind of military sense, which they do not; second, that we must be ready to fight a thermonuclear war, which is insanity; finally, as Haig said, that "there are some things that are worth fighting for." What things are worth the destruction of the Soviet Union, the United States, most of Europe, and imperiling the rest of the world?

These, I submit, are the real questions at issue in the "counterforce" debate, not when and who would strike first and why.

W.H. FERRY

Northampton, Mass.

To the Editors: After reading the January 30 editorial and articles concerning nuclear war, one is tempted to set the magazine aside with a sigh, a shrug and a fleeting thought at the hopelessness of it all. Some readers may ponder a bit longer and think about a local peace group they have heard of; they may even threaten to "call tomorrow." Well, please, pick up your telephone and call! The situation may look hopeless and nuclear war inevitable, but it has not happened yet. We still have time to stop the arms race, but it will certainly take a massive public outcry, and soon!

The Plowshare Eight (King of Prussia Eight) present to everyone who hears of them a great challenge to become active in some way. Rev. William Sloane Coffin, in an address at Riverside Church last year, said ". . . it's clear that governments never put at the top of their agendas the question of disarmament as long as disarmament remains so low on our own agendas. . . ." To prevent nuclear mass destruction all of us must put disarmament work at the top of our agendas.

In Western Massachusetts last November 4, fifty-nine percent of voters in three state senatorial districts voted YES on a referendum calling for a bilateral (U.S. and Soviet Union) freeze on testing, production, and deployment of all nuclear warheads, missiles, and delivery systems. The referendum question, co-sponsored by Traprock Peace Center and the Western Massachusetts American Friends Service Committee, also asked that the funds saved be transferred to civilian use. If a majority of voters in this diverse political area favor a halt to the arms race, maybe all the cold war rhetoric really is not convincing the majority of the population that we need more nuclear weapons.

The issue of nuclear war must be dealt with on a local level as well as through national demonstrations. Nuclear weapons seem far away from many of us who do not live near ICBM silos or land the MX missile would usurp, but the money it takes to build each of those deathly, massively destructive weapons comes from all of our pockets. While we question the morals concerning the use of these weapons, we must also study the moral question of taking money from social services and human needs to create those weapons. We must express our outrage at the emotional and monetary costs of the arms race that threatens our very survival and the survival of future generations. We must make all governments understand that violent responses to political differences in a nuclear world are unjust and insane.

The American Friends Service Committee is one of many nationwide and local organizations striving to educate and activate all people toward preventing nuclear war and stressing peaceful reconciliation between nations. Our Western Massachusetts referendum served as an educational tool and a measure of the public support for disarmament. We urge all persons to search out or start a peace group in their area and join in the national campaign to bring a halt to the arms race.

RUTH BENN
Disarmament Intern
W. Mass. AFSC

Madison, Wisconsin

To The Editors: On reading your editorial, "The Whirlpool of Weapons" [Jan. 30], my impression is that while your concern about the dangers of the arms race is commendable, your thinking is quite confused—an example, perhaps, of what you call "the quasi-pacifism of many liberals."

Limitations of time (mine) and space (yours) permit me to raise just a few semantic points:

1. When referring to U.S. arms expenditures in general, and the Reagan administration's proposed increases in particular, it is misleading to use the term "defense spending." Precision of language can help liberate us from conventional falsehoods: Call it military—not defense—spending.

2. When referring to SALT or other ventures in "arms control," it is misleading to use the term "disarmament," or to imply that arms control and disarmament are in any way consistent or compatible with each other. On the contrary, an agreement such as SALT, which provides for controlled *increases* in arms expenditures and deployment, is the antithesis of disarmament and an obstacle to its achievement.

3. I am baffled by your casual reference to "non-pacifist morality." I can understand non-pacifist pragmatism or non-pacifist expediency. But non-pacifist *morality?* It sounds like one of those perfect oxymorons—military justice, political science, and the like.

ERWIN KNOLL
Editor
The Progressive

For comment on these letters, see editorial on Page 165. THE EDITORS

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